

# **Loss, Repetition and the Everyday**

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## **Loss, Repetition and the Everyday**

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## **Introduction**

My doctoral research aims to explore artistic obsession through repetitive documentation of the domestic and the everyday. Drawing upon the resources of my cultural heritage, I experiment with synthesizing cross-cultural and cross-historical forms. Through theoretical research and creative practice, I use photography, large-scale installations, moving image projections and two-dimensional visual images (paintings, drawings and prints) to articulate my relationship to family and memories.

Starting with research into masters of the moving image such as Andrei Tarkovsky, photographers of the American 'underclass' Robert Franks, and installation artists Mona Hatoum and Yayoi Kusama, I articulate my own relationship to family and memory through moving image projections, large scale installations and two-dimensional images. My varied cultural background – Taiwan, Japan, the US, the UK – as well as my personal experiences, are the basis of my exploration of still photography and the moving image, particularly as projected onto objects and environments, and my development of large-scale installations and two-dimensional works.

Through further research into historical painting and printmaking traditions, and contemporary visual artist On Kawara, I explore the tensions and exchanges between the aesthetic concerns of 'east' and 'west' by, for example adapting the forms of Japanese woodblock prints to contemporary etching and printmaking and applying the tradition of diptychs (altarpieces in the east) and polyptychs (commonly created by early Renaissance painters for altarpieces in churches in the west) to contemporary series of paintings which then become materials for my environmental installations.

## **Core Concerns**

The most significant resource for my works is my life experience and the culture clash of the east-meets-west. I have learnt a great deal about how people see and live life differently in different cultures. I take inspiration from my culture, background, memories, a traumatised childhood in Taiwan and Japan; my early adulthood in the US and this last decade in UK. These experiences and memories are the fertile ground for my art practice.

Art practice allows me to bring new energy to the burden of memories and dealing with loss. It gives me power to redefine who I am or more correctly, it peels the layers to reveal the core of myself. Making art allows me to make sense of the world and of myself. Although the content of my work seems personal, loss is a universal human experience. I

believe artists' ultimate responsibility is to reveal universal truths through exploring their lives and experiences.

When asked why did audiences have to be made to suffer through the three hours of his film *Andrei Rublev* (1966), Tarkovsky wrote in his diary :

'It's because the twentieth century has been the rise of a kind of emotional inflation....there are some artists who do make us feel the true measure of things. It is a burden which they carry throughout their lives, and we must be thankful to them.' (Tarkovsky, 1994: 9, entry 1st September 1970)

Many artists are obsessive in their own way, for instance: Kusama's obsession with self-obliteration, Tarkovsky's obsession with his childhood memories, Hatoum's obsession with exploring the conflicts and contradictions of our world, On Kawara's obsession with the four decades in which he made *Date Paintings*. My obsession might be to find the order in day to day living, to seal memories by documenting mundane moments, ultimately to leave traces of my own existence.

## **Methodologies**

Throughout the last two decades I have been writing, drawing and taking photos. These activities become my research tools for my art practice. I have also developed the habit of collecting memories in different ways, for example: collecting receipts and tickets, recording sound and videos in life, collecting family members' belongings, taking photographs and keeping a drawing diary. Like an archaeologist, I take inspiration directly from the accumulation of these primary research materials, I then develop them into projects with various mediums. The design and film training I had from my BA years allows me to develop and explore my creative practice in various mediums from printing, drawing, textile works, to moving image and film. Contemporary installation encourages me to try new things. Following a design practice, I like to take advantage of different art forms and mediums, to embrace this new-found freedom in the expanded field of contemporary art.

## **Processes**

I start each project from prolific photo documentation, drawings and image makings. My passion for drawings carries over into etchings and paintings; my textile and film background helps me to work on soft materials, screen prints and film-making; my love of Japanese woodblock prints leads me to the realm of linocut printing. I believe through the process of documenting life as it happens, new works will organically develop. I find narratives of human nature in these developed materials. I continuously apply different techniques and juxtapose the elements, striving to develop a coherent body of work.

## **Products**

In these years of the Doctorate, I have created a series of installations which project moving images onto sculptural surfaces and real objects. I also make large-scale installations. The projected videos are developed from my documentary photos and video-footage archive. In these films I experiment with time-lapse, stop-motion, one-shot camera and long-period of documentary film.

For the two dimensional works, I create series of diptych and polytypic paintings which develop from my 'date paintings' and drawings. These 2D works are mostly generated from residencies I took; though the works started from meeting the conditions of galleries, in the process, I was able to steer the concepts and outcomes toward my personal practice.

Other than the studio practice, I am also working on a not-for-profit art project to curate exhibitions and publish art magazines to feature and support independent artists. In these Professional Doctorate years, this curatorial project helped numerous UEL colleagues alongside 140 artists around the world to exhibit in professional galleries in central London. I will continue this professional practice throughout my career along with an ongoing studio practice.

## **Biography**

2013-2014 University of East London, MA Fine Art

2011-2013 University of the Arts London, BA (Hons) Fashion Design Technology: Womenswear

2010-2011 University of the Arts London, BA Fashion Design Technology: Surface Textiles, Distinction.

2009-2010 University of the Arts London, Foundation Diploma in Art and Design, Level 4 Distinction.

1987-1991 National Kuo-Kuang Academy of Arts, (BA) Drama and Film, Distinction. Taipei, Taiwan.

My father and mother met on a fishing trip when Father started his fishing business in Japan. He bought Mother back to Taiwan and they married in the 1960s. Father was a bohemian while Mother is the opposite. On top of the differences of their characters, the gender expectations from both cultures created conflict; sadly, their marriage did not last long. Mother went back to Japan and got re-married years later; I was brought back from Japan living under Grandmother's care while my father remained unmarried and travelled the world.

Growing up in remote small villages in Taiwan, living in Grandmother's big family (she had 13 children) without my parents providing for me and protecting me was never going to be an easy childhood. I made my first major move after I was given a full scholarship by the National Drama and Film Academy in Taiwan; upon graduation, I moved to Hawaii then resided in California for a decade before I moved to Manhattan in my late 20s. I started and ran a private English School in Taiwan and Japan from 2001 to 2008 before I came to London to study fashion and textile design in UAL followed by completing a Master in Fine Art in UEL. All these experiences have had a huge impact on my work.

## Chapter One

### Theory and creative practice

#### 1.1 BA Creative Practice and Theory

In Taiwan I studied Drama and Film. In London my attention turned to textiles, jewellery and garment design. A piece I created as a part of my foundation year project was exhibited at the V&A's Museum of Childhood *Bling* exhibition in the summer of 2010.

My BA final year design collection *White: A Family Album* was based on my identity and heritage. The main feature of the collection focused on pattern cutting skill and fold and drape techniques which are unmistakably the characteristics of Japanese Kimono design. The inspiration was my parents' wedding photos. I explored the design process through the rise and fall of their love story in six garments. (Figure 1)

As part of the Final Project, I made a film, *Face*. (Fig. 2) This was based on the death of my father. It featured all the garments from the collection and won the *Women Film Makers: Best Shorts Competition* 2013 (California, USA)

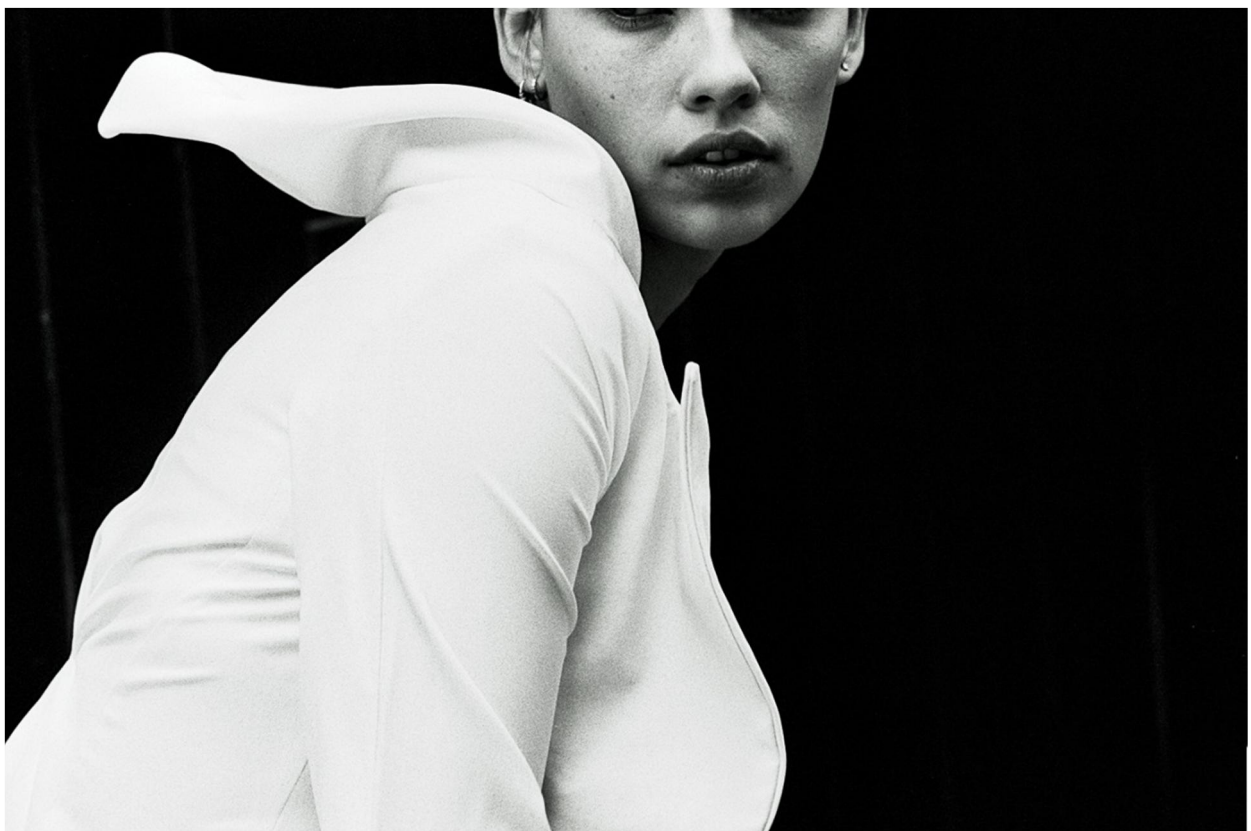


Figure 1 Gloria Lin. (2013) .*White: A family Album*. An Example of the fashion design collection. Photographer B.J. Boyle

it's possibly one of the most anti-fashion films ever made yet

# Face

a fashion shortfilm by shizico yi

David K Whiting

Dawa Ma

premiere

27th/June/2013 6~9pm

Espacio Gallery. London

Curator: Ana Maria Cardoso Cockerill

on line worldwide

28th/june/2013

No Barking Presents

ZigZagZig Production producer: shizico yi

director: shizico yi

director of cinematographer: mk ceesay script: shizico yi editor: mk ceesay

co-producer: alice marcelino leading ctor: david K whiting lead actress: dawa ma

photographer: giacomo cannata (on-set) photographer assistant : alice marcelino

camera operator pa moudou ceesay lighting assistant sound recordist : thompson urhiofe

estefania burgos monge: make-up/ hair artist theme song "remember" by andrei ionescu

end-credit music: talons from death birth life by reigndear. clothes for dawa :gloria shizico yi for andrie :makin ma

Figure 2 *Face*, a short film for BA final project 2013. Gloria Lin/Shizico Yi

## 1.2 MA Creative Practice and Theory

My final MA exhibition ended with five projects rolled into one. It included animated film, an etching project and three installations. The concept of my MA final project was to develop a four-year-long period of research. *Morning Archive* was a spectrum of mediums and approaches; from making objects, etching, animated film and sound recording to realising the final art works as a unified installation. (Figures: 3-11) *Morning Archive* was a concept to deal with and comment on the meaning of the mundane in human life and its inevitable repetitive nature through taking photos of piles of drying dishes next to the kitchen sink on hundreds of mornings across the years. *Morning Archive* is a meditation on time and space and its relationship to human existence.

Based on 308 pictures taken across 4 years, I developed this 2D project in three dimensions, making pots and pans into monumental shapes and forms to occupy a real space. (Figs.: 3-5)



Fig. 3 Gloria Lin. (2014) *Morning Archive*. Installation view





Figures 4, 5 *Morning Archive* details.

*Morning Archive* then further developed into an etching project which gave birth to a body of mono etching prints and an object (the final wrecked zinc plate) --- *Genesis* (figures: 6-8 ) was the result of eighteen days of drawing then translating onto the same zinc etching plate to create twenty-five new images from the process of layering.



Figure 6. Gloria Li. (2014) *Genesis*. Installation view. 7. *Mother*: the wrecked etching plate.

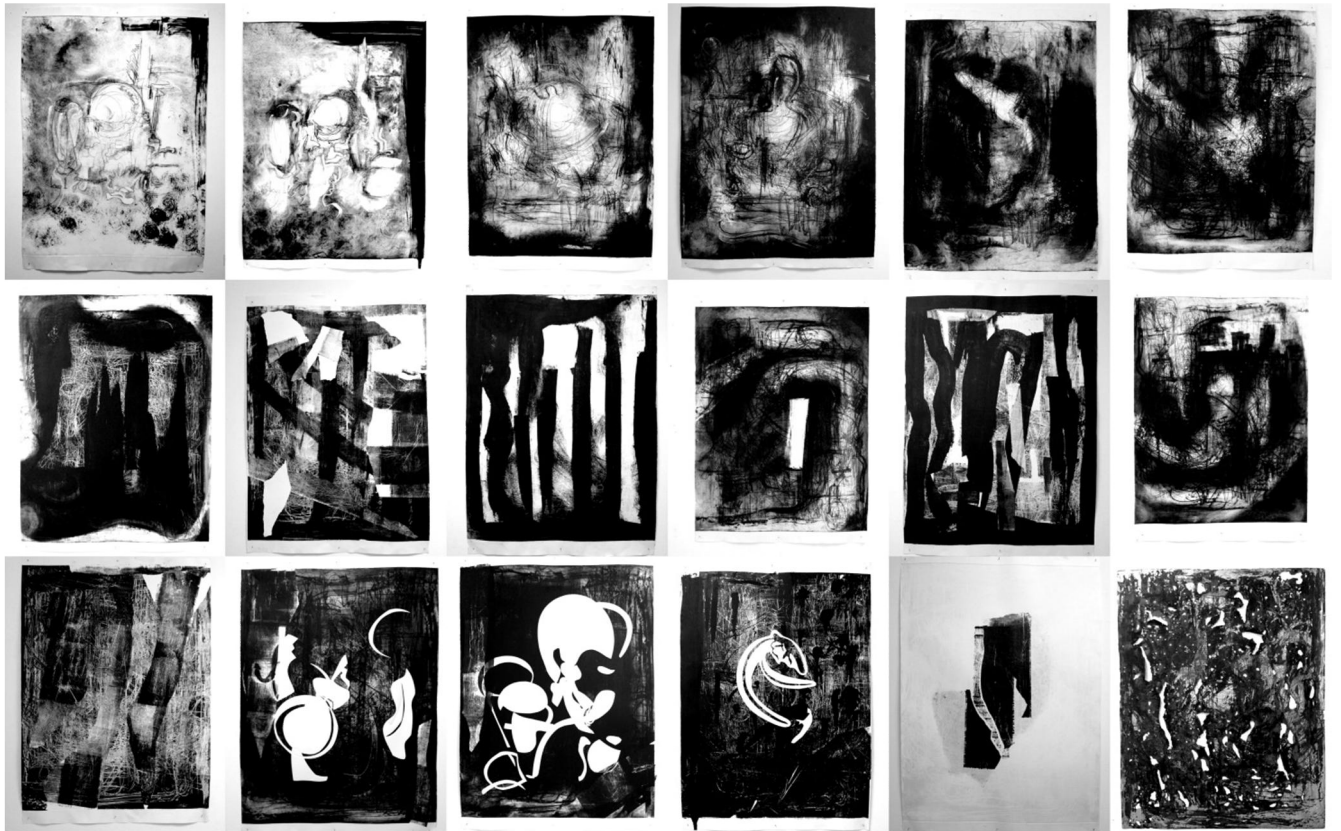


Fig. 8 Gloria Lin. (2014) Details of *Genesis*: 25 Mono Etching print on fine art papers: A result of 18 layers on single zinc plate to create new images from the process of layering. 69.5x100 (cm) / each etching. May-August.

There were two side projects developed to coincide with *Morning Archive* (*Kitchen Story* and *The Doors*. Figures : 9-11); both were based on the main concept of *Morning Archive* though each had a different focus.

Nostalgia and the influence of memory were explored in the *Kitchen Story* Project, through taking photos of family meals and objects linked to my memories of childhood, lost family members and loved ones.





Figures: 9, 10. Gloria Lin (2014) *Kitchen Story*. Installation view.



Figures 11 Lin G. 2014. *The Doors/ Chariot* : a video installation of 100 doors and a toilet seat.

I also made a giant step in my professional practice in my MA year. Under the name 'no barking art', I organised and curated two exhibitions in London in 2014. These not-for-profit exhibitions showcased sixty-three artists from US, Canada, Pakistan, Serbia, India, Russia, Iceland, Hungary, Italy and Japan. All of artists travelled to London with their works for these two shows. These exhibitions attracted over 6,000 visitors. (Figure 12)

I also edited and published an art magazine to coincide with the event. *no barking aRt Magazine* (figure13) is published often concurrently over the course of four- five months, approximately three issues per year. The inaugural magazine has reached 5,560 readers on-line as of Feb 2015.

### **Other Relevant practice in MA year**

During MA, I was teaching art and design to students aged 8-14 years with special needs at Woodland Grange School in Sussex. The school provides quality care and education to children who are emotionally injured from family background or trauma. This programme provides children with the chance of healing through the making of art.





Figure 12. *No barking art Biennale* (2014). Curated and produced by GloriaLin Gallery 25. Truman Brewery. London.

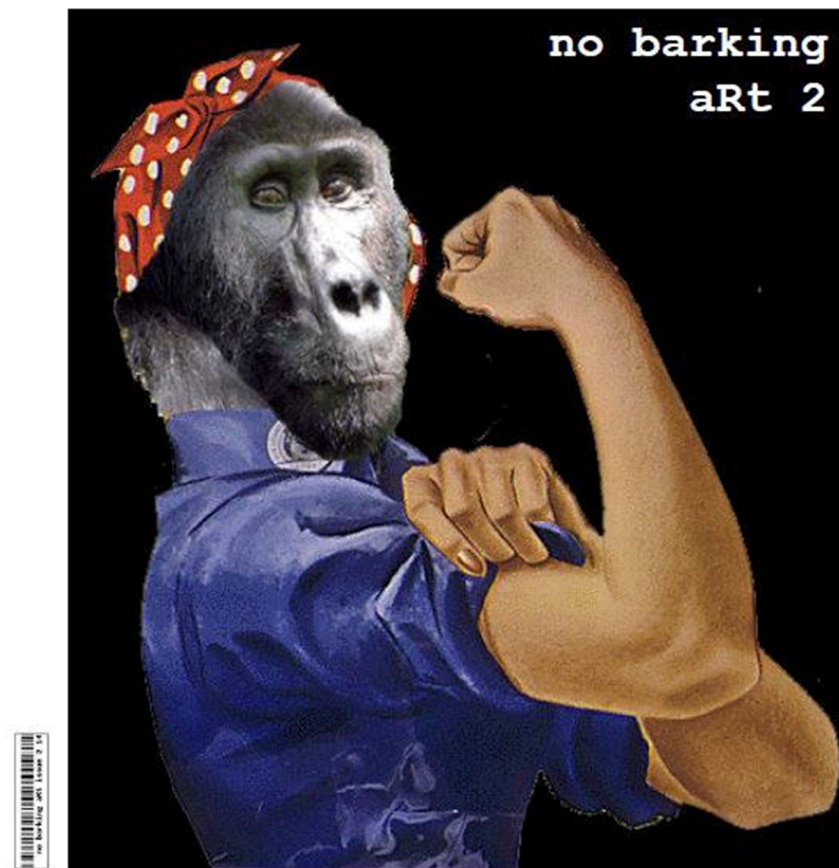


Figure 13 Editor Gloria Lin. (2015) *no barking aRt Magazine* Issue 2

### **1.3 Prof Doc Years: On Loss, Repetition and the Everyday**

In the Prof Doc years, I studied artists whose work shaped my understanding of materials, mediums and my core concerns through three categories: Loss, Repetition and the Everyday.

My aim is to be able to realise linear series of projects with nonlinear narratives through exploring installations which are inspired by my personal experiences; I hope this body of work taps into universal human experience. In the following sections, I reflect on how I have adapted my interests in materiality, simplicity of form, and personal experience and found my vocation in installations. I also reflect on the connections and transitions between the projects through the concepts of Loss, Repetition and the Everyday.

The concept of loss is relevant to grief and sorrow, childhood trauma and general difficulties in life. My works bear a sense of melancholy; the artists' works I am drawn to often use the language of romanticism.

Repetition is a strategy for making sense of loss. Through repeating certain actions, the movements generate visual energy and the loss is both faced and to some degree escaped from. The artists I am drawn to in this category are having internal dialogues, they are inquisitive; making work is almost like a religion to this group of artists. The spirit of my work is like a lost ghost, searching in space and time, repeating and repeating, to find a way home.

Finally, it is in the contemplation of the Everyday that my work comes into being.

## Chapter Two

### Loss

#### 2.1 Loss and Childhood Memory: *Family Album* 2012-2015

Memory plays a big part in my practice. I take inspiration from my personal experiences, upbringing, culture and the background of my family. My creative practice develops in relation to the death of my loved ones, my childhood suffering and universal questions of existence in the time we live in and the space we inhabit.

I am drawn to and inspired by the work of Andrei Tarkovsky (1932-1986) whose films explore childhood memories, his parents and his homeland in a subtle and powerful way. The son of poet Arseny Tarkovsky, Andrei Tarkovsky was brought up by his mother after his father left when the artist was five years old. His mother worked as a proofreader at a printing press.

In *The Mirror* (1975), Tarkovsky interweaves his father's poems throughout the film. He treats his father's poems as threads to stitch the film together with stories of his childhood and his reflection on Russia's history. (figs. 14-15) He uses cinematic language to paint scenes of melancholy, deep sorrow and the hardship of a mother's life. (figs. 16-19).



Fig 14, 15 Stills of *The Mirror*. (1975).

Tarkovsky interweaves his father's poems throughout the film.





Figs: 16-19. Stills of *The Mirror*. 1975. Tarkovsky.

As to his memory of his father, Tarkovsky also found ways to reconcile with the absent and withdrawn Father through his work. In Tarkovsky's third film *Solaris* (1972), he investigated the relationship of a son with his father. In the last scene, the main character appears to be back home after years of space travel. Greeted by his father's dog first, he then arrives at the windows of his father's house where he sees his lonely scholar father cleaning piles of books in the room. When they finally see each other, the tears of the son and the softness in father's eyes meet, then the film finishes with a scene where the son kneels down, embraces his father's legs tightly, like a small boy. (Figs: 20-23)





Figs: 20-23. Stills of *Solaris*. 1972. Tarkovsky.

*Ivan's Childhood* (1962) is a story about a young boy who lost his family in World War II. The vengeance in the boy pushed him to work as a spy for the Russian military. Though the film is based on Vladimir Bogomolov's novel, Tarkovsky is able to add many of his personal experiences and memories into this script. Like the boy in the movie, Tarkovsky's childhood was spent in wartime. Tarkovsky brings the nostalgic memory of being a boy in wartime to create a series of dream sequences.

In one iconic scene working with soldiers in a stone trench, the commodore and soldiers discuss the affairs of the war. Ivan finds himself drifting away as the adults' conversation sinks into the background, the water dropping sound in the damp trench blends into his day dream where rain and storm wash over the countryside, and the camera introduces us to a truck full of apples and the boy Ivan and a girl in the back of a truck playing on the bed of apples. The joyful music and scene continues until the rain stops, the sun comes out again while the truck takes a heavy turn next to a beach. Then tons of apples roll onto the sand where two horses enjoy them after the truck disappears into the horizon. (Figs: 24-27)



Figs: 24-27. Stills of *Ivan's Childhood*. 1962. Tarkovsky.

Professor Dina Iordanova of University of St. Andrews writes:

*The most beautiful memories are those of childhood, Tarkovsky noted, thus a number of private visions were brought into "the texture of the scenery." ...the lorry full of apples, and the horses wet with rain steaming in the sunshine as derived from his personal memories. (2007)*

Nostalgic and surreal dream sequences became his signature pictorial language through which characters could escape into memory or contemplation and viewers could be induced to contemplate along with the artist himself.

### ***Family Album, the genesis***

Many of my works carry the weight of loss and death; most of them are about the family members I have lost. It is through the making that I gradually come to terms with the grief and make sense of the loss. Objects and subjects connoting death are present in many of my works over the last five years, for instance the created scenes of lost worlds, the use of rice and rotten and broken objects in installations. In *Morning Archive-Facing East* 2014 (fig. 28), I used white crockery to form an installation reminiscent of an ancient tomb or archaeology site where the story of one's life was conveyed in these forms of whiteness. In my other work, *The Doors* 2014, I used a toilet seat to represent a chariot. In Asia, we believe a chariot is the vehicle that transports the soul to the afterlife. In another group of installations I use rice and gravel on the floor or cast objects in rice (rice is used in funerals in Asia). One such work is *Family Album* (2015).



Fig. 28 *Facing East*



In the first few years I explored the memory of my family with collages, oil paintings, textiles, garment-making and a short film, wishing to exorcise the feeling of loss and haunted memories. I confronted the subject again in 2015 in my Doctorate Showcase work. In this latest *Family Album*, I worked with real garments which belonged to my family to create a group of sculptures that I placed together on top of Japanese mats called Tatami. Tatami is the nostalgic memory of my childhood. When I installed the piece, the smell of the straw brought me back in time. I used to sleep only on tatami before I turned thirteen (kids in my family were only allowed to sleep on tatamis). These real family garments were filled with fine white gravel which looked like rice. I cut the garments to allow rice (gravel) to run out from the forms. The cuts and the escaping gravel echoed the way in which my emotions ran high when I made these violent cuts. The cut and the broken garments suggest to me violence of different kinds – emotional violence, the violence of death of the family and the violence of my grief over the past decades. (figs. : 29-31)

We believe rice is the symbol of the bridge between this life and the afterlife. Families scatter rice around the coffin in funerals which are often held at home for forty-nine days (seven weeks, the speed of souls travelling to afterlife) with the body in the coffin for the whole period; we chant and do ceremonies around the altar many times a day and take time to bid farewell. At night, we wish to hear footsteps on rice which would bring huge comfort because we believe it's the sign that the soul comes back to pay us a visit. The longing to make connection to lost ones is ingrained in our culture.



Fig. 29 Gloria Lin. 2015 *Family Album*. Installation view.





Figs.: 30, 31 Gloria Lin. 2015. *Family Album*. Details of *installation view*.

The elements of death and loss can be found in almost all of Andrei Tarkovsky's films. His films portray deep melancholy, especially related to the loss of his parents. Even in some films where the main story is about romantic love (for instance *Solaris*, 1972) he would always bring the film back to the subject of the loss of parents by creating dreamlike scenes to escape into nostalgic longings.

I believe the dreamlike scenes in his films are the equivalent of the rice in our funerals, bridging and giving comfort between worlds.

### **My Father and My dog**

In my late twenties, though based in New York, I was having my career in Asia, flying between continents up to four times a month. After 9/11, the journey through US airports become hazardous and burdensome. Toward the end of 2001, I decided to move back to Asia.

By that time, Father and I had not been in contact for over a decade; family history and personal reasons made it impossible to talk to each other. When I was little, Father had German Shepherds who were the descendants of champion royal breeds, winning trophies all over Japan. At one time, Father had around ten dogs at home. I took pride in doing chores of feeding and cleaning his gang of dogs since I was only six.

Despite this family history with dogs, I never had one of my own. After coming back from USA, I decided to have my own first dog. After failing to hunt down sources for a good breed, I finally had an excuse to call my father for the first time in more than a decade to ask his advice and we arranged to meet. Today, fifteen years later, I still freshly remember the excitement of that first encounter: meeting my father after so many years and holding this tiny furry Yellow Labrador in my hands was invigorating and moving.

Years later, my puppy grew up, Father got old, I was occupied with work and our lives moved in different directions again. It was another six years before we met again, in tragic circumstances when Father killed himself. After my father's shocking death, my dog Favor has been my only family. Deep down I know if I learn from and survive the death of my dog, I will live as a more complete person, with more wisdom and clarity. I believe many of my recent works are influenced by my subconscious need to prepare myself to survive the loss of my dog.

## 2.2 Loss and Trauma

### *Face, The Wedding and As I lay in 1000 ways*

To emigrate is always to dismantle the centre of the world, and so to move into a lost disoriented one ...then, we are all in great need of new maps.

--- John Berger, *And Our Faces, My Heart, Brief as Photos*, 1984

Artists I have been researching in the doctorate years are ones that relate to my work in terms of materiality, simplicity of form, and personal experience, in particular the experience of trauma. These are all women artists: Mona Hatoum, Ana Mendieta, Marina Abramovic and Louise Bourgeois.

Displacement has been central to the exploration of trauma by contemporary artists, whether it is through war, industrialisation or other political events or through personal history. Displacement leads to dislocation and the sense of 'disbelonging' <sup>4</sup> (Falguieres, 2012). Each of the women artists mentioned above deal with trauma through their art. Similarly, my childhood traumas and displacement in early adulthood (for personal rather than political reasons) have been the hidden force behind most of my works.

Bloody fluids, raw animal organs and death frequently played a part in the works of women artists of this generation. Ana Mendieta (1948-1985) created provocative and radical performances, for instance depicting rape crime scenes or chopping off a rooster's head. Violence and pain are also prominent in Marina Abramović's (b.1946) early performance pieces: from her first performance work in 1973, the *Rhythm Series* where she cut herself twenty times to explore the limits of the body, then lit her body on fire in the following year for the same series, leading up to her most famous *Rhythm 0* in 1974 where Abramović allowed the audience to use on her naked body any of seventy-two objects on a table, including a rose and a loaded gun. Though her use of materials is more traditional - object making, drawing and painting, installation – artist Louise Bourgeois (1911 – 2010) spent a lifetime exploring themes of destruction, anger and fear in family relationships.

Mona Hatoum's (b.1952) earlier performance works were often disturbing. Inevitably they tapped into the trends of the time: the rise of Feminist art, new-found sexual freedom, the celebration of new forms of art, and engagement with political themes. (Hatoum 2016) In *The Negotiating Table* (1983) Hatoum lies motionless on a long table for three hours, her head and body wrapped with blood- stained bandages covered in a plastic bag. ( fig. 32 ) A year later, in a performance called *Variation on Discord and Divisions* (1984), she cut a raw animal kidney, pulled from her under shirt, and offered the slices to the audiences in a room covered with newspapers. (fig. 33) Wallis believes that Hatoum's work has been informed



by her experience of exile, a condition of displacement shared by many in the modern era. (Hatoum, 2016: 15)



Fig. 32 Mona Hatoum. (1983). *The Negotiating Table*.



Fig. 33 Mona Hatoum. (1984). *Variation on Discord and Divisions*.



## Trauma and Violence

From Marina Abramović (1946), Chris Burden(1946 –2015),Wafaa Bilal (1966) to Petr Pavlensky (1984), generations of artists confront trauma by nudity or harming their bodies, by in effect visiting trauma on themselves. Most of them are facing childhood trauma, displacement and loss of family. I am interested to understand this response and the art that comes from it, and I want to understand why I deal with trauma in other ways.

As far back as I can remember, I was seriously beaten by my mother. This happened numerous times each day with Japanese fruit knives, thick sticks and other objects, and I was forced to stand for long hours and clean on my knees at a very young age. My mother took out her emotional and marital troubles on me. I was thoroughly vulnerable in my childhood. As a result, I have trouble dealing with other people's anger, bullying and violence in general, and I have difficulty with even the idea of bodily harm or sexual exploitation. This might also explain why I avoid social gatherings, protests or displays of anger to get one's voice heard, though I have always been very active working with charities and helping vulnerable people. Deep down I am a fully formed feminist and I protect my body and my autonomy very seriously; however I have difficulty in calling myself a feminist. This may have to do with the fact that the violence I experienced came from another woman.

My tendency to turn away from violence might explain why I am drawn to poetic work like Tarkovsky's. From the very start of my practice as a fine artist, I chose to work with trauma poetically, for instance in dealing with my father's tragic death in my 2013 film *Face*. Traces of violence, though, can be found in a number of my works. The jumbled and broken crockery in *Morning Archive* seems to suggest a chaotic domestic world that is repeatedly being formed, destroyed and re-formed in an effort to order and understand it.

The uncanny feeling of danger in the familiar domestic setting is more pronounced in one of the sculptures of *Morning Archive*, entitled *Mother* (2014). A toaster I purchased when I moved to London and an Asian kitchen knife given to me by my mother represent the abuse I suffered in childhood (fig. 34). I wanted to convey a sense of freedom from the acting of breaking and the form of broken. Violence directly enters my work later on in the broken bottle pieces (fig. 35), and there is even a latent sense of violence in the frozen and silenced objects in *The Wedding*.

As someone who experienced personal trauma from an early age, and as repetition can be found in almost all of my works, I am interested to understand the relationship of trauma to repetition in art. Psychoanalyst Christopher Bollas's ideas about psychic genera, the receptive unconscious and the 'elaboration of idiom' are relevant. Genera is the word he gives to 'a particular type of psychic organization of lived experience that will result in creative new envisionings of life.' The idea of genre is the counterpart to trauma and is at the centre of artistic creativity as well as the ordinary creative act of living out or 'elaborating' your own personal 'idiom'.

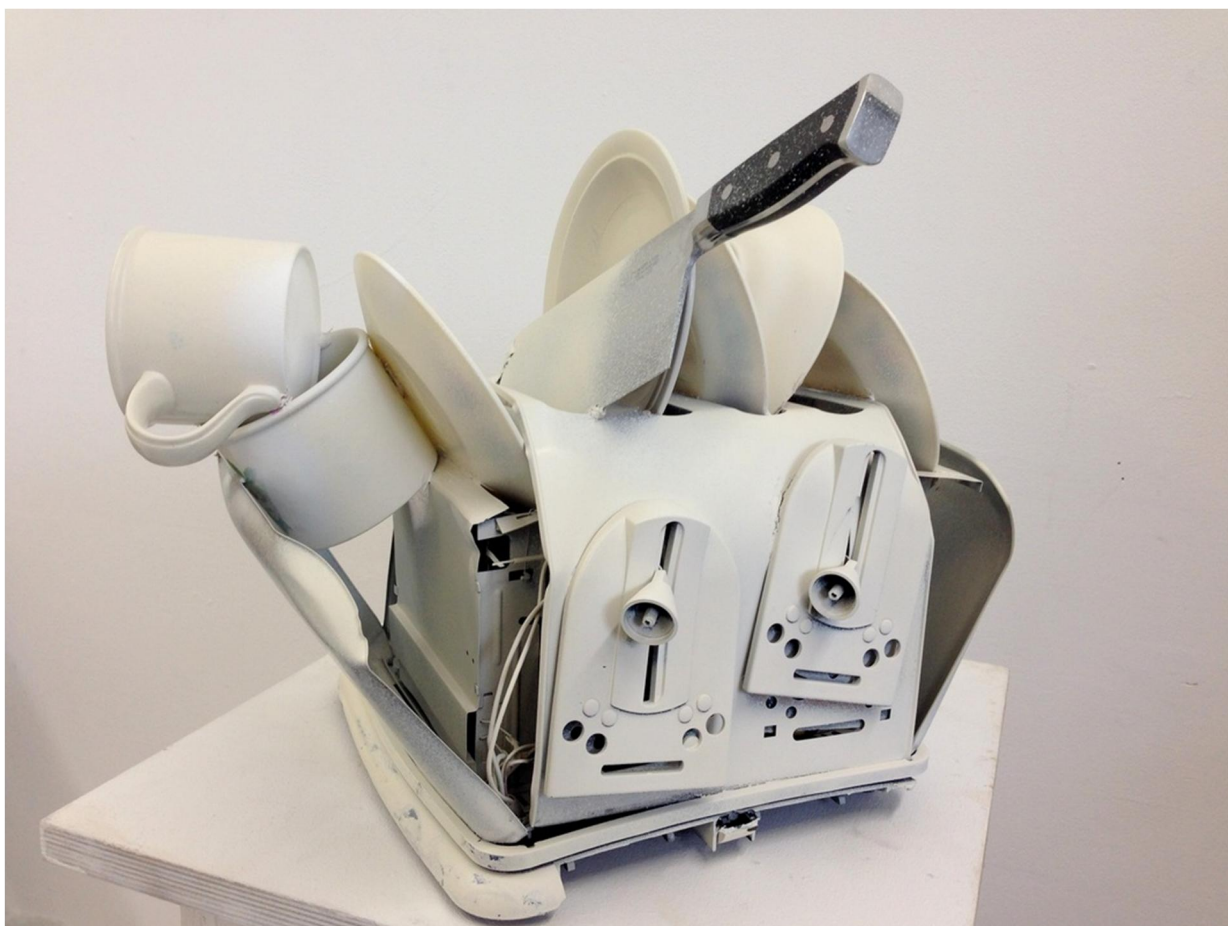


Figure 34. Gloria Lin. 2014. *Mother*. Mediums: toaster, knife, and crockery.



Fig. 35. Gloria Lin. 2015. *Broken Bottles*.

For Bollas, there is a complex relationship between trauma, genre and symbolisation. If the need to get rid of trauma is overwhelming, then the result may be defensive repetition rather than creative elaboration of your idiom.

*'If the trauma is subsequently symbolically elaborated (in discourse, painting, fiction, etc.), the aim may be to evacuate its disturbing effect through the work of repetition and displacement....'* (Bollas, 2011: 59)

However, symbolic elaboration may spring from a playful act 'dedicated to the transformation of the psychic suffering and traumatic perspectives...' And symbolic elaboration itself can be painful. '...The incubation of genera can be, and usually is, the work of great personal struggle, as any change in one's status quo involves emotional turbulence.'

Bollas argues that childhood trauma reasserts itself with eruptions of emotional turbulence which emphasise the true isolation and helplessness of the traumatised person, echoing something of the children's original aloneness. He explains that abused adults may be confused by the uncanny feeling they have been the object of abuse, and may be unsure whether it really happened or not.

*'Psychic confusion is part of the full effect of trauma because the feeling that it might not have happened, that it could be invention, underscores this person's (the traumatised) increased lonesomeness.'* (Bollas, 2011: 57)

In my case, there was no confusion. I knew the abuse had happened and it was well known by my family and close friends. From the age of ten to seventeen, I sought help by talking to relatives and mental-health counsellors at my school. This resulted in silence from my family and shocked counsellors, but I had enormous support from my teachers from elementary school through to college. They took me to their family events, provided school jobs for me to work between classes in order to pay my book fees; they asked colleagues to make lunches for me or secretly paid off my field trip fees so I could join the class.

Through the kindness and love shown to me by these outsiders, I gained a sense of home and was able to distance myself from my traumatic upbringing to some extent. Later on I was able to give my students and the people around me similar warmth, and to receive unconditional love from my students and friends. I learned to make my way out of trauma and depression by self-educating, reading, observing people and trying to understand my mother's cruelty, and the carelessness of my parents and relatives. When I grew older, I found solace in looking at art. Now I try to make sense of my world through making art. I have learned how not to be 'helpless' and I have learned not to be afraid of being alone, which is very useful for an artist.

In thinking through my experiences and the help I sought in living through them, I have come to understand the part that trauma plays in my creative life and my art practice. The underlying trauma might provide some of the drive for me to make art. I use repetition as a

strategy to continually bring to the surface and confront difficult things. Repetition is also an essential part of some of my subject matter, for instance the highly repetitive routines of caretaking. Another point is that ritual is an important part of my culture, and ritual is repetitive. For these reasons, repetition is not only a strategy I use for making work, but repetition is, using Bollas's concept, part of my personal 'idiom' which I am enriching and elaborating in my artwork.

The fact that I can treat painful subjects with a sense of hope, redemption and even joy makes me think that repetition for me is a strategy for symbolic elaboration. Maybe because of the support I found for myself in the world outside my family, I believe my trauma has not resulted in avoidance of or an inability to elaborate. My work might be about pain, loss or grief, but the process of making it creates a place where I am loved. Sharing my artwork with others is an essential part of it. 'Works of artistic imagination' writes Bollas 'are...samples of individual idiom made available to the other.' (*Being a Character: Psychoanalysis and Self Experience* 1933: 202)

### **Traumatic Loss : *Face* 2013, a film about my father's death**

"... you have to do the work of grieving. You have to let it run its course. Pain is the agent of change; pain is what allows you to change, it's what enables you to reach a new reality."

-- Julia Samuel, *Grief Works*, 2017

In her book about grief, psychotherapist Julia Samuel wrote that there are two sorts of loss: expected loss and traumatic loss. Writer Joanna Moorhead lost her three-year-old sister when she was nine in a road accident. Moorhead wrote that the shockwaves from that traumatic loss still reverberate in her family after forty-four years. Time doesn't erase the pain when we lose our loved ones especially when they die in tragic ways. I am aware of some unresolved grief since my father's tragic death; what I feel is not only the grief of his loss but also the pain he felt. I sat with his body alone in the bathroom while waiting for the funeral company to take over; these are the darkest hours one could possibly face and after his death, I was trapped in the loop of his pain. I imagined his hopelessness, I saw the darkness through his eyes and I felt the pain of his decision to end his life. The contrast between his tragic death and his calmness in planning that death makes the loss even more unbearable. It is in this pain that I lived for the past nine years.

In 2013, I wrote a fictional script *Face* in which a female angel dressed in white witnesses and follows an old man in his last day. The lonely old man goes to different places preparing

his own death. Despite being an angel, she fails to recognise the old man's fate and stops him. The film ends with a note of reconciliation after the man's death. I directed and edited the film, and I also made six garments to dress the angel. I know it is a very personal project and I have to confront it from as many angles as possible. (fig.36) According to Samuel grieving is an intensely individual and incredibly lonely experience. Through the film, the pain could finally be shared with many others who have had similar experiences.

Samuel writes that death disrupts the complex and finely tuned balance in a family, so everything has to be reorganised. *Face* (2013) is a project I made to face that darkest day; it took me five years before I could confront my father's death despite the fact that I was living with the grief every day. In order to deal with the trauma I had to relive that day in the bathroom. A film, rather than a painting, was the most direct and virtual way to do that.

*"You don't forget the person who's gone...you fold them, and their loss, into the new person you become; ... in the end, is the greatest tribute any of us can make to anyone who has died."* (Samuel. 2017)

If Samuel's theory is right, that pain is the agent of change, then it did serve me well in the journey of becoming an artist; the pain urges me to change. It is in my father's darkness, I feel the need to see the light; in that darkest day, I saw where I would end up if I stayed in my own darkness. Though this traumatic loss was so great that I could not function properly for years, it was in the aftermath that I felt the need to make art in order to move forward; the film project was the turning point where I decided to direct my career toward fine art instead of design. As this film was a continuation of the *Family Album* project, this subject matter also became the centre of my doctorate work.





Fig 36. Film Stills of *Face* 2013; a short film about my father's death. Gloria Lin.

## ***The Wedding 2016***

There is no happiness in love, except at the end of an English novel.

---Anthony Trollope. (1857. Ch.20). *Barchester Towers*.

In 2015, I ended a seven-year relationship. The trauma of dealing with emotional violence led to a series of new works, some of which I put together to form an installation called *The Wedding*. It was shown in my second year Doctorate Showcase exhibition. *The Wedding Project* began from making a wedding kimono like one I would hope to wear at my wedding. I drew with threads and stitches on fine fabrics, layered onto traditional cotton fabric. The stitched drawings were memories of river journeys my partner and I took together.

Then the long train of the kimono looped up to become three dimensional ripples which covered the wedding table; on top of this I laid eight objects cast in transparent epoxy which symbolised memories of our life together. On two sides of the space, I installed a symbolic wedding chandelier made from the same looping of the fabric onto wire hoops. At the other end, the wedding meal was set out on a banquet table: a real wedding cake and four real cooked dishes which had been cast in epoxy. (figs.: 37- 40)

While Anthony Trollope believes that happiness in love can only be found in literature, I disagree. I believe happiness can be extracted from years of painful yet sweet experience, and this is what I wish to preserve through making *The Wedding*. Through the long process of preparing a 'wedding' by casting, embroidering and kimono making, I wished to trick my mind into remembering the happy memories instead of staying in a sorrowful state. I use casting to preserve and freeze meaningful objects in time. This serves as a magical process to transform the memory into visual form, allowing me to deal with the fragility of human existence.

Many viewers thought it was a funeral rather than a wedding. The installation has the tone of both occasions, in the contrasting energy between happy memories and emotional trauma, and the paradox between objects (memories) that are preserved but frozen and unreachable – no longer living.



Figs.: 37-38 Gloria Lin. 2016. *The Wedding*. Installation View





Fig. 39 The wedding banquet: a real wedding cake and four cooked dishes cast in epoxy.



Fig. 40 Details of *The Wedding* installation: Objects and real food cast in transparent epoxy.

## Chapter Three

### Repetition

Repetition is one of my artistic strategies when I work with the loss and memories. I repeatedly use casting, drawing and photography to preserve loved memories and objects.

Yayoi Kusama is another female artist I have studied; her works express the kind of energy of obsession and repetition which I see in my own works. In 2012, I went to Kusama's exhibition in Tate while I began to work on the *Family Album* series. One of the highlights in this exhibition is *Infinity Mirrored Room*. It is the fruit of an artist's lifelong obsession, compulsion and self-obliteration. *The Infinity Mirrored Room* is a dark room where the floor is filled with water. On the water is a path for viewers to walk through the dark space. The walls of the room are made from mirrors. Hundreds of colour-changing lights are reflected on the mirror walls. The lights illuminate the dark room as if it's in outer space, a space of infinity stretching out in all directions. (Fig. 41) This immersive experience also inspired me in making installations later in my MA and Doctorate years.

Kusama's obsession with dots and self-obliteration have been enduring motifs in her artistic career, from her early 1960s performance art to the latest works. Claire Bishop stated in her book *Installation Art* that Kusama's self-obliteration is typical of a 1960s psychedelic sensibility. 'But the endless echoes, though premised on self-obliteration impulses, is ultimately in the service of erotic fusion.' (Bishop. 2005: 90-91)

French writer Roger Caillois wrote two essays on insects in the 1930s describing the psychological and physiological process of camouflage in the animal world. He compared an anxious-obsessive compulsive condition to certain animals and insects merging into their surroundings to become 'invisible' at the first sign of danger. According to art critic Jo Applin, this is the condition of Kusama's self-obliteration. (Applin. 2012:5)

In 2012, this Kusama's installation, *Infinity Mirrored Room*, has become a mature installation of a space of infinity where viewers might finally feel 'one' with the environment, something which Kusama set out to achieve in the 1960s. Her Tate show 2012 opens with numerous gouache drawings, watercolours and earlier oil paintings; these works are among those 2000 small scale paper works she made in Japan before moving to New York. The room leads to a vast space with a group of white paintings each made from thousands white dots; each dot built with an intensive brushstroke and different densities of paint. These are the original '*Infinity Net*' paintings from her group shows in New York 1959. (Fig. 42) These white paintings, powerful repetitive two dimensional canvases exhibit this artist's obsession and compulsion. They are soon replaced by hundreds of bulged three dimensional white, silver and gold phallic objects. These phallic forms and dried macaroni plague the room on

the furniture, hanging dresses, high heels and other everyday domestic objects. Kusama's phallic objects are reminiscent of what Bishop described as 'the erotic fusion.' (Fig. 43)

At the rear corner in the room, a small opening leads to another dimly lit room filled with wallpaper prints and, on the centre floor, hundreds of phallic objects on a real boat. Tate has successfully recreated the *One Thousand Boat Show* which Kusama original shown in Gertrude Stein Gallery in New York in 1963. The space features one boat with 999 posters of the same boat. (Fig. 44) Walking on, we enter another space infected by numerous hand-sewn phallic sculptures in shapes and forms displayed in various heights. This sensation is like that of Phillip Glass's obsessive musical notes.



Fig. 41. Kusama Y. 2012. *Infinity Mirrored Room*. London: Tate Modern. Photo credit: Lucy Dawkins/Tate Photography. © Yayoi Kusama





Fig. 42 Kusama in her New York studio with her *Infinity Net* paintings. c.1958–59 / Image courtesy: Ota Fine Arts, Tokyo / © Yayoi Kusama, Yayoi Kusama Studio Inc.



Fig. 43. Kusama Y. 2012. *Accumulation series*. London: Tate Modern. Photograph: Sarah Lee for the Guardian.

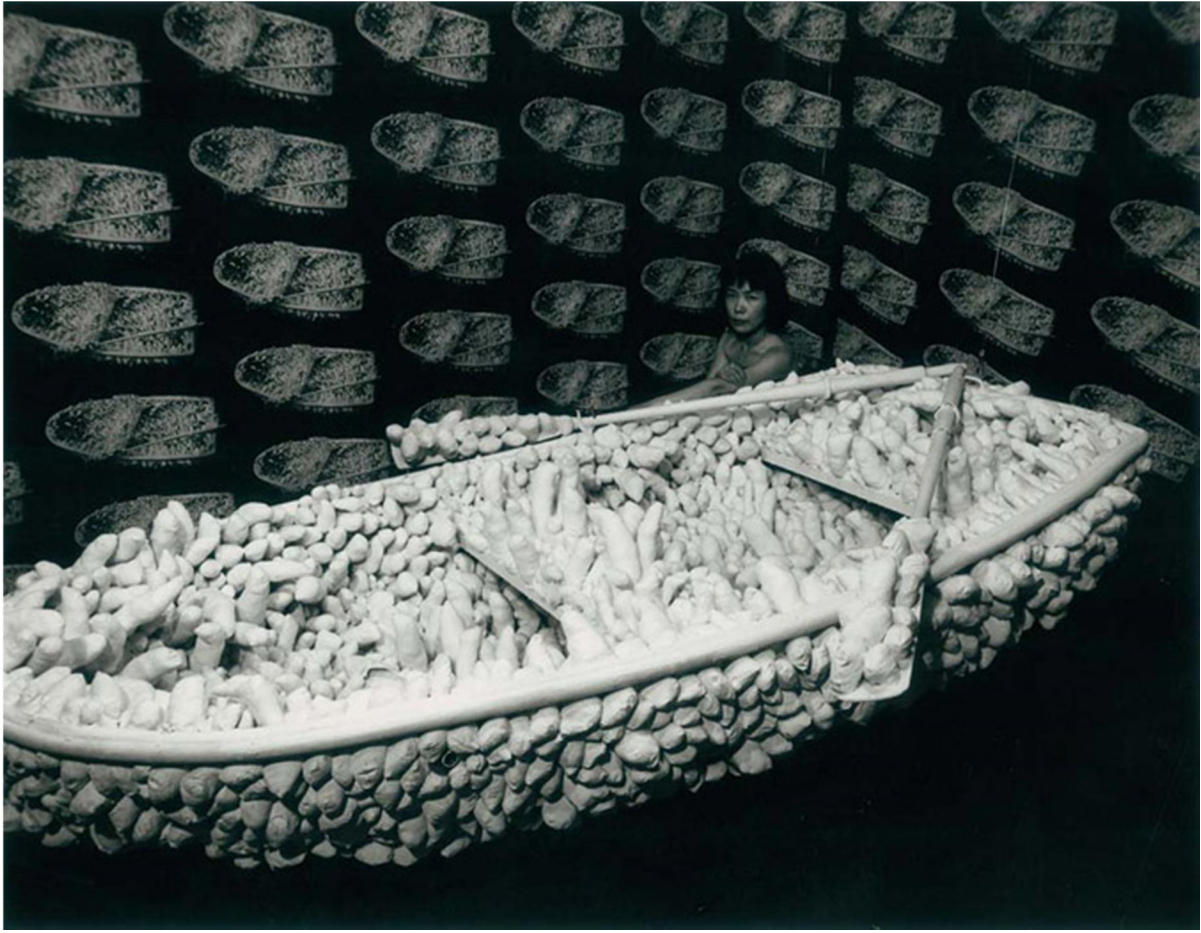


Fig. 44 Kusama was posing for *One Thousand Boats Show*. 1963. Installation view at Gertrude Stein Gallery, New York. © Yayoi Kusama Studios Inc. Image Courtesy : Ota Fine Art, Tokyo.

According to Jan Verwoert , Kusama's works bear the essential mark of the trauma of a damaged psyche which remains an open wound, crying for sensual experiences. The repetitive dots and spots in her works provide a clue to the meaning of this trauma. (Grasslin. 2004) In an interview in 2000, director of The National Museum of Art Osaka, Tatehata Akira asked Kusama if proliferating dots was her attempt to flee from psychic obsession by choosing to paint the very vision of fear. Kusama replied: " I paint them (dots) in quantity ; in doing so, I try to escape." Then, Akira affirmingly stated: "This obsession signals both the desire and the need to escape; salvation through self-obliteration." (Tatehata. 2000 : 14-28)

If repetition is Kusama's way of escaping the world, one of mine is to work repeatedly with photography and drawing to create works in series.

### 3.1 Repetition through Photography

*There is one thing the photograph must contain, the humanity of the moment. The kind of photography is realism. But the realism it's not enough--- there has to be vision, and the two together can make a good photograph.*

--- ( Robert Frank. 1962:22)

Taking photos has been the main activity of my primary research for my studio practice. Each year I take thousands of photos documenting mundane moments in my day to day life.

Photographers Robert Frank is a profound inspiration for me to see how artists live life behind the camera. I find his works raw, emotional, and a window onto human existence. My subjects are of a more personal nature yet they are no less a documentary of human existence and the larger society.

Robert Frank (b. 1924) is one of the *51 American Photographers* curated by Edward Steichen at The Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) in 1950 which subsequently led him to be included in the important photography exhibition, *The Family of Man* (1955) in MoMA, New York. The exhibition tells through pictures a certain story of human history of the last hundred years around the world.

*The Americans* (1959) was a two year photography project Frank took across United States covering a ten-thousand-mile road trip across post-war America. In this body of work, Frank's earlier romantic view of London, Paris and New York was replaced by the images of a depressed post-war America. (figures: 45-48)





Fig.45. Work print from *The Americans* 18 and 19, *Parade, Canal Street—New Orleans*, 1955, 1990.28.423 National Gallery of Art Archive, Washington, DC.



Fig. 46. Final print of *Trolley*, New Orleans, 1955, Robert Frank "*The Americans*" National Gallery of Art Archive, Washington, DC.





Fig. 47. Robert Frank. 1955. *The Americans: Funeral, St Helena, South Carolina.*



Fig. 48. Robert Frank. 1955. *The Americans: Car accident US 66 between Winslow and Flagstaff Arizona.*

T. S. Eliot used the term “ the objective correlative” (Eliot. 1932) to refer to the emotion evoked in the audience through the materials and the forms of art. John Szarkowski, a curator at MoMA said in a video about Franks’ *The American*:

“ It was something in the very bones of the photographs themselves ...there was something approaching a sharp edge of bitterness in the look of the pictures.” (Szarkowsky, in Brookman and Brookman 1986: online video interview)

Sean O'Hagan wrote in an article for *The Guardian* (2014): ‘The Americans was shocking and enduringly influential because it simply showed things as they were.’ Frank, in his early nineties, told O’Hagan “I wanted to present what I saw, pure and simple.” This kind of simplicity and directness of photo-documentary is what I want to keep in my photos and film projects too. By simply showing things as they are, I hope my projects contain the raw energy stored in these images.

Writer Johnathan Day suggested Szarkowsky recognised the destruction in Franks’ photographs and described the uncomfortable and challenging images of the people in *The Americans* as a maturation of an art form in which Frank’s had found his “ objective correlative” (Day. 2011: 38)

Sontag also wrote about the relationship of the pain of others and our own:

*One has the right to, may feel compelled to , give voice to one’s own pain---which is, in any case , one’s own property. One volunteers to seek out the pain of others....they seek it (the pain) not to feel more but to feel less. ( Sontag. 1977: 39, 40)*

My photos and films as a whole reveal a great deal of melancholy in human existence, a sense of aloneness and uncomfortable truths of life where beauty can be found.

## **Repetition as a Visual Language**

*Space is an illusion but time is not.*

--- David Hockney. 2015. *Hockney*.

David Hockney once explained his Polaroid collage works in the documentary film *Hockney*. He said that space is an illusion because it could be made to seem bigger, but that time is not an illusion in these pictures. The number of snapshots was evidence of time. Each click counted the passing of time.





Fig. 49 David Hockney. 1982. *Shooting Film: "Joiners"*, Composite Polaroid.

Another photographer Wolfgang Tillmans uses layers of images to reveal time. Tillmans took 176 pictures on the site of Tate Modern's new wing throughout its construction. He manipulated his shots on an old photocopier, copying the images in a single colour by scanning each picture four times. This distorted and shifted the colours as the result of layering; the final image created a unique and complex perspective made up of many moments in time. (Wallpaper. 2016 :99. Switch Craft.)

The element of time is revealed in my day-to-day photo-documentation projects *Morning Archive*, *the Door* and *1000 days*. These pictures are the testimony of time and the visual evidence of my existence. When I print them and mount them in a space I believe these pictures bring time into physical form.

**Repetition : *Morning Archive*, *the Door* and *1000 days* 2013-2017**

**- on three photography projects**

I started taking photographs as my research method when I was a textile designer. At first, I went out to take forest and urban city photos to find inspiration; before the smartphone era, my camera was a part of my daily accessories.

With this self-imposed training, I started to see things differently. One winter morning in 2010, I looked at the pile of dried dishes next to the kitchen sink and I took the first *Morning Archive* photo. Since then, I have taken a photo of the pile of dried dishes at the same spot several mornings a week for the next four years. The last photo of *Morning Archive* was taken in the morning of the day we moved to a new flat, on May 13<sup>th</sup> 2014. *Morning Archive* contains 306 pictures, 306 mornings over four years. This project is where I found my fingerprint and voice as an artist. *Morning Archive* is a meditation on time, space, the everyday and its relation to human existence. It comments on the meaning of the mundane and the inevitable nature of repetition in life.





Fig.50 Lin G. 2010-14. *Morning Archive*: images from the 306 pictures (took over four years).



*The Doors* was a development from *Morning Archive*, with a different focus. *The Doors* was a collection of moments inside the stalls of public bathrooms I went to in the course of one year (2013-2014). It contains 100 photos of public bathroom doors. Instead of showing the photos as photography, I decided to project them as a film onto the wall and place a toilet seat in front of the images as an installation. I was hoping the setting would create the contemplative and private moments that are enjoyed inside a public space. *The Doors* was also inspired by the first smartphone I used in 2013. The size of a smartphone camera meant I could take photos in all sorts of conditions in daily life. The pictures were projected in the smartphone's vertical screen format which was a perfect fit with the shape of a bathroom door. *The Doors* was my first attempt to set up a video installation and it was a turning point for my practice. ( Fig. 51)

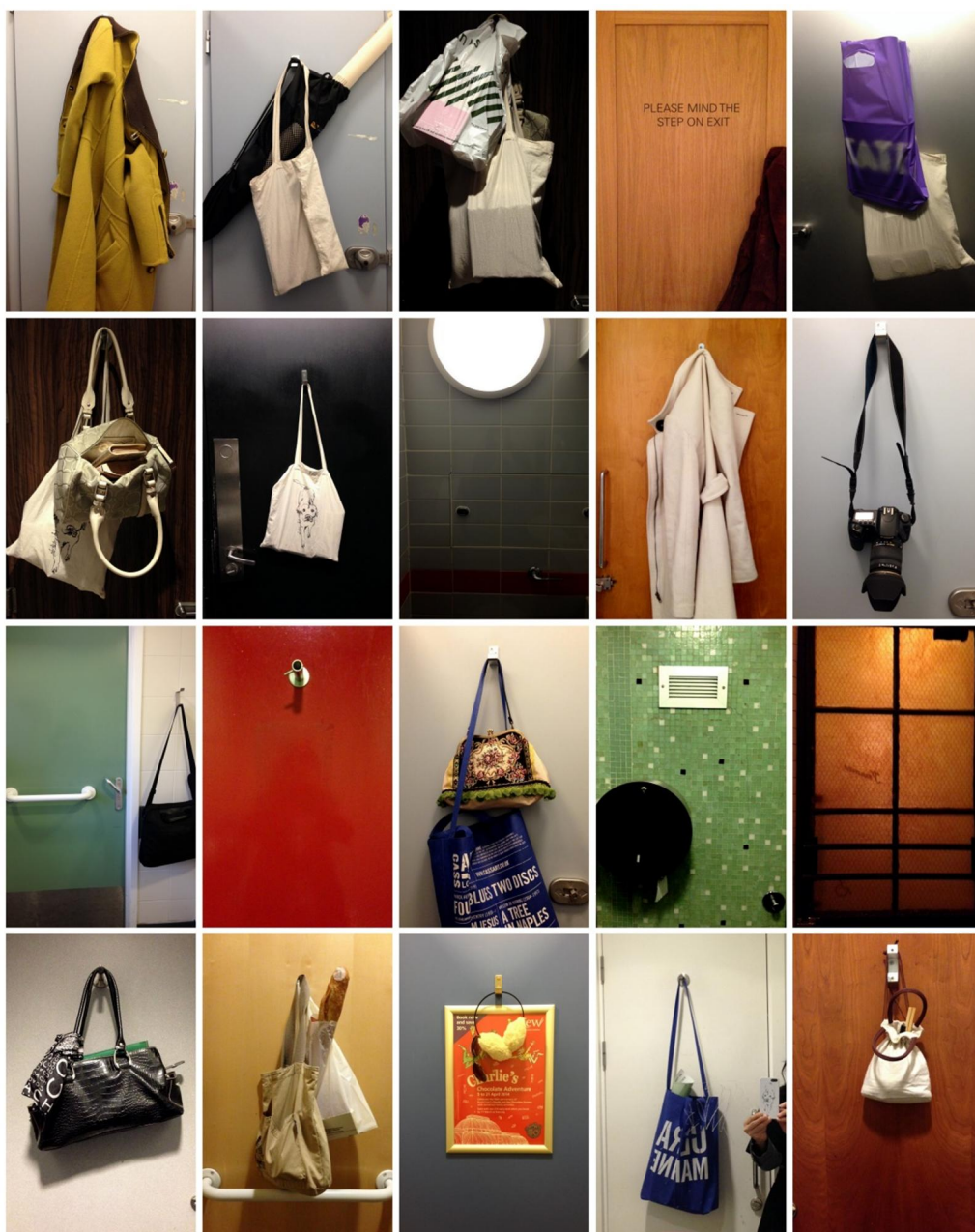


Fig. 51

Gloria Lin. 2014. *The Doors*: a selection of images from 100 doors.

Alongside *The Doors*, I developed another video installation. I projected a collection of my family dinner images onto our authentic family dining table *Kitchen Story* 2014. These two projects started my interest in installation, especially in projecting images onto meaningful surfaces.

In 2013, my beloved twelve-year-old Labrador was diagnosed with Wobbler Syndrome, a neurological disease affecting the cervical spine that gradually immobilises the front limbs. By now, 2017, he is completely paralysed in all four legs. In autumn 2016, I collected three years of my i-Phone photos and created a montage of my life with my dog since he got ill. I mounted the small images like a mosaic wall mural. I called it *1000 Days*. It was one of the main pieces I installed for my second solo exhibition in Dray Walk, The Old Truman Brewery Gallery in London (2016). I continue to develop these daily photo collections. *1000 Days* will be part of my Viva exhibition. (Figs.: 52-53)

*Morning Archive*, *The Doors* and *1000 Days* were three photography projects I developed from 2010-2017. In these seven years I documented everyday moments in what has become my way of living. Making and compiling a large number of images is one of my main artistic strategies. The way I work has made my daily life and my art practice almost inseparable; the repetitive use of photo-taking and drawing allows me to study my life and bring it into form in the real world. The visual language this has created runs through my montaged photo and drawing collections, my installations, and my video projections. By continuously, obsessively, repeatedly making things that have symbolic meaning, I strive to overcome childhood trauma, to seek a perfect motherhood and my own family to belong to. In common with many artists in many art forms, I am seeking to gain control over harsh reality.





Fig. 52. Gloria Lin. 2016. *1000 Days*. Installation view.

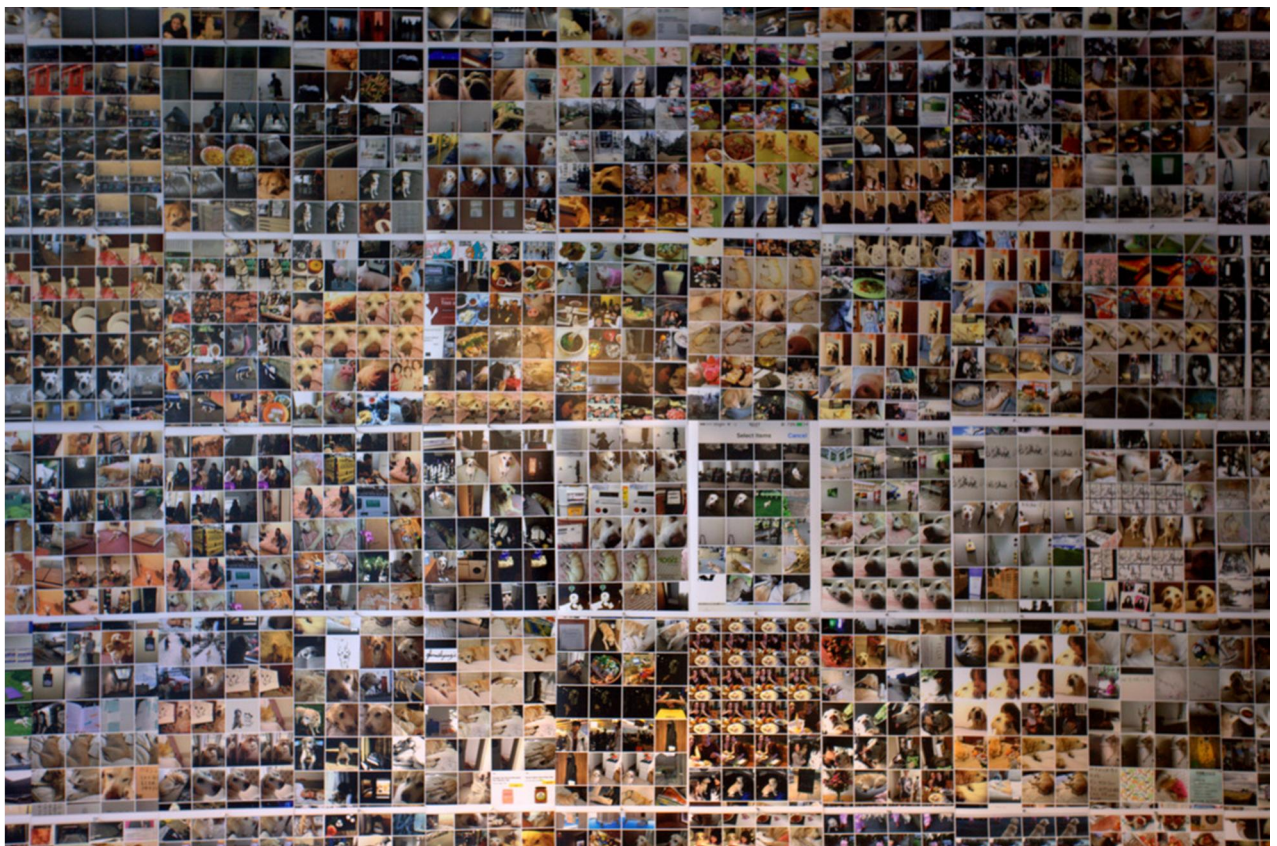


Fig. 53. Details of *1000 Days*:  
a collection of montages of my life with my ill dog in three years. 2013-2016



### 3.2 Repetition through Drawing

...every scribble reminds you of the act of the drawing and of the pleasure of that act. It is this that makes Picasso's drawings insolent. ...They know no servitude. The act of drawing them is triumphant. "

---John Berger. 2016. *Landscapes- John Berger on Art*.

My etching project *Genies* (2013) tells a story about time by drawing over twenty images for eighteen days on one etching plate. As in my time-based photography works, these distorted etched images are the evidence of my existence in time and the memory of that period. They are the result of my passion for drawing.

John Berger wrote about a drawing Picasso drew in a medium-sized sketchbook in 1916. It depicted a nude female torso with an unrecognisable face; the head is scarcely indicated. Berger had a hunch that this drawing was in fact, Picasso's memory of Eva Gouel, Picasso's young lover who lived with him for four years before she died of tuberculosis. The drawing was done six months after she died. Berger believed that this distorted figure lay as an image on paper in the same way a memory lies in the mind.

Berger proposed three distinct ways in which drawings can function: to study and question the visible, to record and communicate ideas and to relate to a memory. He believes it is important to recognise the distinction between the three, for each type 'speaks in a different tense'. (Berger. 2016: 22)

The first type belongs to those studies which contain the artist's presence, here and now; time is obliterated by an eternal present. These great drawings speak in the Present indicative Tense. Such drawings are carrying lines as the traces left behind by the artist's gaze; these lines ceaselessly interrogate what is before artist's eyes, however ordinary and everyday the subject may be. Berger gives a series of drawings called '*Taken From Life*' (1603-09) by the Flemish painter Roelandt Savery as an example of this type. Four hundred years later, he believes we still encounter figures from these drawings in our daily life, on the way to airports, to parks or tube stations.

The second type of drawing is often done as a sketch or working drawing for a painting or design. These drawings bring ideas together, they set a scene. They are like windows onto men's capacity to dream, to construct an alternative in the imagination. The tense of such drawings is Conditional.

Finally Berger describes the third type, drawings from memory. He argues we look at these drawings like historical subjects, with curiosity. He believes the most important drawings of

this type are those made in order to exorcise haunting memories. Picasso's drawing of Eve would belong to this category. Because artists want to get these memories out of the mind onto paper, the images may be sweet, sad, frightening or cruel; each drawing is unbearable in its own way. According to Berger, Goya is the master of this kind of drawing which speaks in the Historic Past Tense.

I have been making drawings daily for years. Time is irrelevant when I am drawing from observation and these drawings survive and are with me, here and now and forever. I also have intensely relied on making sketchbooks over the last eight years. These sketchbooks house hundreds of my ideas and quick drawings; often I make quick drawings in order to remember my imaginings so I can come back to modify them. In the years of the Doctorate, I have used these drawings to communicate with my supervisors about the work in progress of my projects, installations and exhibition ideas.

Mona Hatoum is very keen on making sketchbooks at different stages in her working process. In her Tate Modern exhibition (2016), there was a section devoted to her sketchbooks. It was presented with many of her working drawings and plans for her installations in which the artist's streams of thoughts could be observed too. I thought these drawings were the most fascinating and openly intimate views into Hatoum's thoughts about her working process.

*Favor* (2015) is a drawing project I showed in the Doctoral Showcase UEL (2015). This included forty-eight drawings I made of my dog Favor. I showed them next to my video projection to create an environmental installation. The video is a four-hour documentary film shot over three months, recording my dog and myself in real life in our kitchen. I projected the film life size in a white-furnished darkened room. The idea of this installation is to preserve memory through replaying these moments onto authentic furniture from my kitchen next to these drawings of my dog. These drawings are the type that I made with observation of the everyday. I hope they are the type of drawing that speaks in the Present Tense, staying in time, here and now with me forever.

In 2017, I am working on a drawing project which is a lineage of the 2015 *Favor* series. I had started this project alongside a writing project; together I called them *Documented Happiness/the Daily Drawing series*. It's also an homage to On Kawara's *Date Paintings*. My concept for this project is writing thoughts and making drawings whenever I feel a sense of calmness, satisfaction or peace. I want to focus on the simplest everyday things that might be overlooked in the tough round the clock work of taking care of my paralysed dog. Sometimes I could not write a single word for weeks, but often I found it much more direct and easier to draw. I plan to show these accumulated drawings in an installation for my Viva show.(fig.54) I imagine these drawings in a chapel-like space filled with airiness and light. I also imagine, in the future, containing my dog's ashes in a home-built chapel-like space in the garden, an alternative space where my dog and I can be together beyond time. I know I will have a need for contemplation and transformation within my grief. My passion for

drawing also anticipates a stop-motion animation which I plan to make. I want to edit a script based on memories of me and my dog in the everyday; the animated drawings will follow.



Fig. 54. Examples of *Daily Drawing Series*, 2016-17.

## Chapter Four

### The Everyday

#### 4.1 Marking the Everyday

##### **29771 days, *Everyday Meditation***

1963, on the way to Paris, about to give up his art practice for travel agency; Kawara visited a 15,000 years old Spanish cave, Altamira. He was struck by the marks and drawings in the cave and thought it was a site of human consciousness expressed in art making. The visit opened up his practice. (Weiss. 2015) Kawara later produced hundreds of drawings in response to Cave Altamira after he arrived Paris and continued to do so after moving to New York. He grouped 198 drawings of them and stored them in a cardboard box with a label coloured red and black, the colours of Altamira's cave paintings. This work we now known as the *Paris-New York Drawings*.

4<sup>th</sup> Jan. 1964, On Kawara created his first canvas of *Date Paintings, Today* series which was initially a five-year plan. Kawara wanted the project never to be shown before it's done. The most important group of *Date Paintings* contents ninety-seven paintings made between 1 Jan -31 March 1970. These three months were to be his most prolific period in making *Date Paintings*. On Kawara continued to make *Date Paintings* before his death, in the end, the project last for forty-eight years.

Kawara first exhibited selected thirty-one *Date Paintings* from this important period in the Tokyo Biennale, 1970. The latest exhibition *On Kawara – Silence* at Guggenheim New York (2015) is also the first museum exhibition that takes a full overview of his works. *Silence* included these ninety-seven paintings to be shown in sequence for only the third time in forty-five years. On Kawara was able to work closely with the curator in setting up this exhibition; he chose to identify this special group of *Date Paintings* by the title *Everyday Meditation*. They were made in a period of the last New Year of his initial five-year plan. (fig. 55) In this special period, Kawara made at least one painting a day consecutively, something he was never been able to achieve again in his forty-eight years of making *Date Paintings*.





Fig. 55 Installation view of *Date Paintings* at *On Kawara – Silence*. 2015. Guggenheim, New York. Photo Credit: Stefan Haus.

In the spirit of On Kawara, I started a new drawing project to mark my ill dog's 15th birthday, which is one year longer than the date of death predicted by vets since he was diagnosed with Wobbler Syndrome. Subconsciously, I want to celebrate the event of his survival and remember our time left in the world together, so a drawing project became relevant to me; the working title of the project is *Documented Happiness*. I am counting my blessings by making drawings and short writings on the everyday. I take each drawing as a meditation.

Ritual is a machine for the destruction of time.

--- Claude Levi-Strauss. (1966). *The Savage Mind*

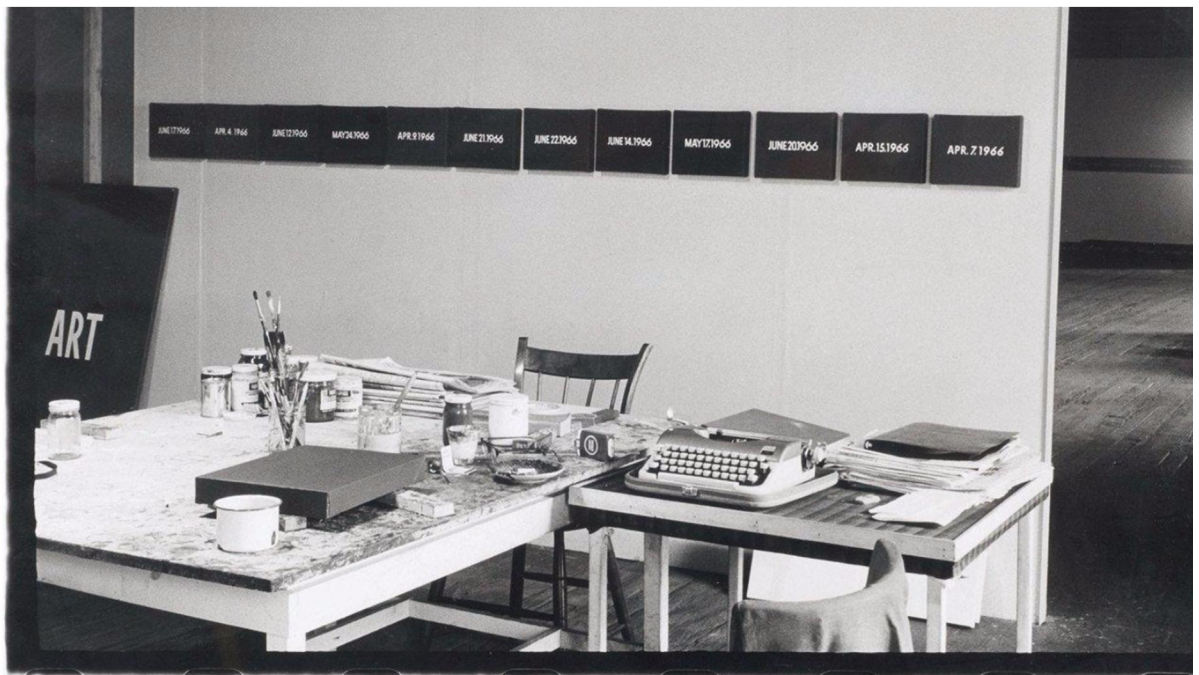
On Kawara made works by dating, mapping, listing his daily activities and documenting people he encounters through variety of means. Kawara gave each category some self-imposed rules and produced them in strict repetition, for example, *Date Paintings*. His

works are informed and weighted with content yet revealing little of his personal thoughts and emotions; Kawara remains like the title of his last solo exhibition, in 'silence.

Guggenheim curator Jeffrey Weiss thought the intensity of Kawara's practice in the *Today* series (which lasted over forty-eight years) is almost euphoric. The curator believed that the name *Everyday Meditation* suggests that these works are forms of meditation and that Kawara's practices are ceremonial and ritualistic in their repetitive nature. The name *Date Paintings* also reference the everyday. All of his work contains the element of time, telling us something is begun and finished. Each of the *Date Paintings* is accompanied by a newspaper clip (fig. 55) , connecting Kawara's solitary of making *Date Paintings* to current events in the world at large. (Weiss. 2015)

Unlike Kawara, my work often reveals personal emotions and feelings; yet it is inspiring and encouraging to see similarities in our work ethos. I have developed my work under self-imposed rules, with repetitive elements since 2010 when I first started *Morning Archive* and *Family Album* series. We share a concern for the everyday and we work on each project for a long period of time. I wish to think that we are both searching to find a pocket of silence through daily art practice.

Kawara passed away in New York 2014, at the age of eighty-one. Very much true to Kawara's spirit, his Japanese gallery published an official: On Kawara, was alive for 29771 days.



Kawara Studio , 1966 © Cornette de Saint Cyr maison de ventes

## 4.2 Kitchen Stories

Mona Hatoum is an artist who makes use of domestic environments and the objects and utensils of home life. After a three-year residency working in a studio environment at the Cardiff Institute of Higher Education, Mona Hatoum's work began to shift. According to Guy Brett, as a result, Hatoum worked toward an intense involvement with materials and physical objects. (Hatoum. 2016: 51) Christine van Assche, Hatoum's exhibition curator in Centre Pompidou writes that the use of domestic materials is essential in this artist's works.

*'Hatoum employs domestic, mundane, ordinary, personal objects: organic elements that she collected, everyday objects (furniture and kitchen utensils) and industrial materials.'* (Hatoum. 2016: 20)

*Home* (1999) is a long table holding various utensils mainly ones used before industrialisation. Viewers are fenced from the table installation by bars. The utensils on the table are linked with electric wires, a few bulbs were installed inside the utensils allowing the light to shine through the holes of the utensils. Though the work is about 'home' which ideally should offer security and warmth, like many Hatoum's works, the domestic always conveys an uncanny feeling of threat and danger, in this piece through the use of bars, cables and wires. (figs: 56-57)



Fig. 56. Detail of *Home*. Hatoum. 1999. Photo-credit: Tate Archive. London.



Fig. 57. Hatoum. 1999. *Home*. Full installation view. Photo- credit: Tate Archive. London



***Kitchen Stories: Morning Archive II, Lady and Her Dog and Lady in No. 5***

“I am an artist. I am a woman. I am a wife. I am a mother. (Random order). I do a hell of a lot of washing, cleaning, cooking, renewing, supporting, preserving, etc. Also, (up to now separately) I ‘do’ Art. Now I will simply do these everyday things, and flush them up to consciousness, exhibit them, as Art.”

---(Ukeles. 1969. *Manifesto for Maintenance Art*)

Female artists took the conceptual art movement of the 1960s and 70s and turned it to their own ends, using performance art, photography and video. They often drew inspiration from domestic settings and subjects, and through their art works they challenged social roles, gender inequalities and injustice.

Mierle Laderman Ukeles addressed the cultural roles forced upon females in her iconic feminist images of washing, scrubbing and maintaining public spaces. She drew parallels between the tasks often expected of women and those assigned to manual labour and maintenance workers (Hill, 2014). Her works brought into view the value of women’s labour which is often invisible. Her art works dignify labour that most people see as undignified (Scott, 2016). In *Wash: Washing, Tracks, Maintenance: Outside 1973* Ukeles scrubbed and cleaned the exterior stairs and the plaza of the oldest public museum in the United States, Wadsworth Athenaeum. This was one of four works in her series of performances about maintenance; the other works included the artist mopping inside the galleries, cleaning display cases, and locking and unlocking rooms under public view in the same museum. The performance is documented by twelve photographs and two sheets of text. (Figs: 58-59)

*‘Ukeles wrote her Manifesto for Maintenance Art as a challenge to the oppositions between art and life, nature and culture, and public and private. Her work highlights otherwise overlooked aspects of social production and questions the hierarchies of different forms of work, such as housework and low-wage labour, topics that are still very relevant today.’* (Arnolfini. 2013.)



Figs: 58-59. Mierle Laderman Ukeles. 1973. *Washing, Tracks, Maintenance: Outside*. Twelve black-and-white photographs, two text panels, dimensions variable. From a performance at the Wadsworth Atheneum, Hartford, Connecticut.

Martha Rosler tackled various issues in her six-minute video performance, *Semiotics of the Kitchen* (1975). Rosler staged herself as a cooking show host in a domestic kitchen setting, performing in a semi-comic fashion an A-Z utensils roll call. At the beginning of the video, Rosler puts down the clip-board and reaches out to an apron, then very slowly, she puts on the apron and in a semi-robotic neutral tone, she says: 'Apron.' She goes on to pick up utensils in alphabetical order and announce them until she arrives at U-Z, when she performs the shape of the letters with her body gestures instead of utensils. As the items progress, she performs her comical movements and semi-robotic voice with more aggression, abruptness and sometimes violence, suggestive of pent-up anger and frustration coming out. At the very end of the performance, she crosses her arms firmly on her abdomen, then in an unexpected movement, she shrugs, with her head tilted to the side and comically raises her eyebrows before returning to the crossed-arms position to end the film. ( Fig. 60)

*Semiotics of the Kitchen* used the setting and utensils of a domestic kitchen to highlight the frustration of being female in everyday life, and the hostility of a male-dominated society to the role of women. The artist's shrug at the end of the performance layered meanings into the protest, creating more questions for us to examine, particularly the attitudes of women themselves toward the given role of the female in our society. Did the shrug suggest resignation? Women's acceptance of our own roles? Was she neutralising the anger that had just been shown? Did the shrug express the absurdity of the performances women are forced to go through, or the need to laugh about it and 'shrug it off'?

*...The work ( Semiotics of the Kitchen) then tips over into a performance whose critical edge results not only from the artist's precise analytic and emphatic understanding of the matter but also from the formal structure of her acting. In her subtly anarchic and comical presentation of the tools, Rosler addresses the aggressivity that is inherent in "the Woman in the kitchen" – from outside as well as from inside. (Eiblmayr. 1982.)*

Another layer of meaning in this piece is in the way Rosler performs the letters U to Z with her body. Austrian art historian Silvia Eiblmayr writes:

*...In demonstrating women's instrumentalized position, Rosler; within the logic of her alphabetical order, finally turns into a tool herself. ...the letter itself: U, V, W, X, Y, Z become written by her body, which in turn means that her body becomes written by them.*

*In her (staged) subjection to the "insistence of the letter" Martha Rosler clearly shows that it is not only a role her "characters" are subject to, an ascribed social role that could and should be changed. She also shows that the structures of power, domination, and submission and their ideological ramifications have to be detected and analyzed not only within the economic, social, and political realms but also within the system of language and signs itself that constitutes the order of the Symbolic. (Eiblmayr. 1982)*





Fig. 60. Martha Rosler.1975. *Semiotics of the Kitchen*. Film Stills.

Domestic life is also the setting for much of my work. For four years in the making of *Morning Archive* I took pictures of my kitchen sink before I put the dried dishes away as a ritual at the start of my day. For fifteen years I have cooked homemade stews for my dog before we end each day. The kitchen is the first place I wake up to and the last place I turn off the lights.

One of my video installations included a collection of my family dinner images projected onto our authentic dining table. (Fig. 61) I documented the used crockery and left over food on the table after fourteen family parties, then projected these images onto the same table in the centre of an exhibition space I created - a dark three walled room with a gravelled floor, filled with my family furniture and household items. Visitors were invited to walk into this dreamlike space while watching these meals appearing and reappearing on the table in endless loops. The sound of viewers walking on the gravel is a symbol of the bridge between death and life, an idea which I borrowed from funeral culture in Asia. This entire immersive installation is titled *Lady in No. 5* (my house number) and the table projection is named *Kitchen Story* (2014).



Fig. 61. Gloria Lin. 2014. *Kitchen Story*. Dining table and video projection. Installation view.

In 2015, following on from a group of kitchen related projects, I made another documentary film of my life with my dog for three months in the kitchen. The final cut of the film is twelve hours. I then projected the film onto my authentic kitchen furniture in large scale in a three walled space to create an installation called *Lady and Her Dog* for my Doctoral showcase exhibition (figs: 62-64). In the process of mounting the work, I was frustrated with the shadows on the wall cast by furniture when projecting the film. The authentic kitchen furniture is the main part of this work. After many testings, I failed to fix the shadow without removing the furniture. Before the final setting, my supervisors visited the site to discuss my work. One of my supervisors thought the split images in fact made the film more interesting and might bring more variation and meaning to the installation. I was encouraged by the thought and decided to work with the imperfection to my advantage instead of against it. This was another turning point. After this installation, I developed new works by using both the surfaces and the shadows of the objects to create split images from the projected film. One of the works is *Memory Landscape: Venice* (2016). The split effect is



transformative, not only in the meaning of the film but also in my way of working with video installation.



Figs: 62, 63. Details of the installation view *Lady and Her Dog* 2015. Gloria Lin.





Fig. 64. Full installation view of *Lady and Her Dog* 2015. Gloria Lin.

In these works related to the kitchen, my aim was to transform real life into an alternative universe through documenting mundane activities such as washing dishes, cooking and having meals with loved ones. Behind these installations is my belief in art's power to make these small moments in everyday settings into a place I could be protected, freed from time and harm.

Although my work taps into the conversation of domestic related works made by women artists in the history of contemporary art, my tone and intention is quite different. The labour of 'maintenance' that Ukeles highlights in her work is also present in my film about taking care of my dog. The somewhat 'manic' tone of my speeded up film hints at the difficult and relentless nature of this work, as maybe Ukeles' performance does too. However, my film is talking about a 'labour of love'. Women's domestic work is different from paid manual labour in that it is often done for a loved one, which might make it harder to change, but it definitely gives the labour a different quality.

I understand the tedium and absurdity that is presented in *Semiotics of the Kitchen*, but that is not my experience of the kitchen and it is not what I am trying to present in my kitchen works. Food and its preparation and the act of offering it to others is an important part of the culture I grew up in and the associations of nurture and care. So it is natural for me to turn to the kitchen and meals for my imagery and the themes I want to explore.

There is one final reason why I think my work departs from the work of feminist artists like Rosler and Ukeles. When a woman artist feels violence and oppression from society, art can be the medium to make our voices heard and to bring changes. In my case I suffered violence from another female who was, unfortunately, my mother. Then the focus of protest shifts from the rights of the female to the rights of being human. My works are more about the struggles of being a person, even sometimes a sexless one. To me as a female artist, art is where I come to find shelter and restore my relationship with maternity. I would say that I am seeking protection from art rather than protest through art. Through making art, I am seeking to reclaim my own identity as a woman and as human being.

I spent my first few years on the Doctorate entirely and subconsciously ignoring the subject of the female artist's role in social changes. I guess that was because of my damaging relationship with a 'strong female' - my violent mother. I have spent my entire forty years learning how to be a person not just a woman, since I have no ideal roles to follow. In my final year of the Doctorate, my supervisor addressed the missing link in my research: the lack of the evidence of works made by women artists related to domestic subjects. This has brought me to see the obvious, which I had been avoiding. Facing up to this has been more difficult than I expected, though it has also brought me to a revelation: I finally could study these female predecessors without a personal agenda. I can have an open mind to understand what they have done in relation to my own work.

For the first time, after years of art practice, I have found a new home in the study of the beautiful heritage of these artists. Art gives us, women artists, the power to be equal, to challenge the problems, to shake up society so we can move forward, and forward is indeed where I want to go. When artist Nina Katchadourian interviewed an art handler for her audio tour about dust at MOMA in her *Dust Gathering* (2012), and when I cleaned and

emptied my ill dog's wastes day after day in my video *as I lay in 1000 ways* (2016), we all became Ukeles's heirs. Thanks to these female artists like Ukeles, and my supervisors, now I can proudly say:

'I am an artist. I am a woman, I am a dog-mother. (Random order). I do a hell of a lot of washing, cleaning, cooking, renewing, supporting, preserving, care-taking etc. Also, I 'do' Art. Now I will simply continue doing these everyday things, and flush them up to consciousness, exhibit them, as Art.'



### 4.3 Caretaking

Life is bristling with thorns, and I know no other remedy than to cultivate one's garden.

-Voltaire. 1769

I realise that my dog is an extension of myself; I perceive no otherness between myself and him. In the process of taking care of his illness, I feel every bit of his deterioration and suffering, so much so that I have to find refuge in something other than this pain. I find this refuge in my back garden. Through gardening I am able to witness a reviving energy that gives me strength to deal with the hardship of caretaking.

Gardener Monty Don describes the relationship between the unique British passion for gardening and the companionship of dogs. He believes our love for dogs and gardens is the psychological need for green and the memory of nature which we lost to the brutalities of the industrial revolution. (Don. 2016: 61)

*Dogs are the other element of that transplanted desire for older rural harmonies...What is wonderful is that this is a wild animal which has chosen to go into partnership with you. Built into that relationship is a sense of dogs tracing the contours of Don's own life...* (Tim Adams. 2016)

A garden is the contour of nature's cycle; my dog is the contour of my life for the past 15 years and remains so even now when he is so ill. Because dogs age seven times faster than humans, their life span also heightens for us the fragility and impermanence of life. I feel a similar thrill and warmth when handling the soil and watering plants as I find in the daily tasks of raising and taking care of a dog. Some strands of my work try to capture and convey both the relentless work and the thrill and warmth of it

In my installation, *As I lay in 1000 ways*, I planted two small gardens inside of a wooden baby crib and a dog bed. I used plants from my own garden to create memory landscapes made from Cypress, Calluna Heathers, Pieris, Carex, Hellebore and tall grass. (fig. 66) Each plant stands for certain meanings; for instance, Cypress represent both 17-Mile Drive in Monterey Bay in California (the road is famous worldwide for the dramatic cypress trees), and here at UEL, London where coincidentally stops at Cypress Station on DLR. These two places bring me many great memories; as to the Hellebore, nicknamed Christmas Rose, it blooms during my dog's birthday.

## Parenthood

The marriage of my parents in most people's mind was a match made in heaven but in reality it was not. My mother is Japanese, my father was from Taiwan. Five decades of Japanese invasions of Taiwan had brought cultural shocks and a long lasting bitterness in my father's family and many fundamental differences between their two countries. Perhaps because of my parents, I have been overly cautious about relationship and having children.

A study of Holocaust survivors from a research team at New York's Mount Sinai hospital led by Rachel Yehuda stems found out that, contrary to what was previously thought, trauma can be passed on genetically. Thirty-two Jewish men and women were studied, who had either been in a Nazi concentration camp, witnessed or experienced torture or who had to hide during the second world war. The finding is the clearest example in humans of the transmission of childhood trauma and emotional memory to a child via what is called "epigenetic inheritance". Biological Psychiatry has already published the research which concluded:

*This is the first demonstration of an association of preconception parental trauma with epigenetic alterations that is evident in both exposed parent and offspring, providing potential insight into how severe psychophysiological trauma can have intergenerational effects. (Yehuda. 2016.)*

Maybe subconsciously I don't want to pass my trauma onto innocent souls by having children. I believe that my dog's arrival in my life prevented me from having any regret if I was not able to make a family of my own. My dog has accidentally fulfilled my desire to be a mother.

Favor was fifteen years old in 2016, which is 105 in human years. He needs my full support and care on all every level: moving him around, turning him, doing his toilets. As he depends on me more and more, we are becoming more closely connected in body and mind; his illness brings us closer. His wisdom and energy, despite his decline, gives me great joy, and the fear of losing him is greater than ever. Though Favor is like a son to me, the fact that he is a dog allows me to deal with his illness by filming and documenting it. I doubt if I would feel the same openness if he was human. Ethical questions would come into play and I would feel I was exploiting his privacy. In a way, my dog allows me to have creative freedom, as I can explore in my artwork realities of the caretaking relationship that are equally relevant to human beings.

In her article *Why dead pets matter* (2015), Olivia Lichtenstein talked about her research on the grief of losing a pet:

*Grief, it turns out, is grief, however you cut it and comparing readings for pet grief as opposed to human grief on the griefometer serves little purpose. It's still the same familiar ache that swells from gullet to gut and fills the entire chest cavity, which only that old cliché time can heal.*

For a time, I used a baby monitor to help me keep an eye on Favor when I could not be with him. I found myself sometimes drawing my dog through the baby monitor while he was sleeping in the other room. (fig. 65) One day when Favor is gone, I will have a baby monitor showing a twenty-four hour endless 'Favor Video', pretending he is still asleep next door.



Fig 65 A glance of *Daily drawing* series through baby monitor.



Fig.66 *Constant Gardener* 2016 authentic dog bed, Hellebore, Carex, Pieris Japonica, pebbles.



## Caretaking : a Constant Gardener

For Favor's recovery, I dreamed of making a garden. As he was not able to walk, we moved to a ground floor flat that comes with an overgrown back yard. I started this garden project in 2015. It has been one of the liveliest and most inspiring things I have ever achieved. I started it for personal reasons but it has gradually worked its way into my creative thinking and has become, directly or indirectly, a part of my art practice. There is little space for gardens in my culture and I had never planted a seed in my life before. Like the casting process, I taught myself horticulture from basics. I started planting seeds, plugs and bulbs, clearing the ground and conditioning the soil.

Like a painter, I paint with plants to make a small paradise in London where Favor and I find a home away from home. Gardening is also a short cut to nature in our urban life; it feels even more magical when my indoor life is challenging and frustrating. By the time of writing, hundreds of daffodils and tulips which I planted last winter are saluting the warmth of spring; willows, hellebores, wisteria and many other deciduous plants are coming alive into silver catkins, rosy flowers and shapes of greenery. By cultivating, giving constant care, in return, I learn to receive and enjoy the simple abundance from nature; through seasonal planting schemes, there are always new bulbs and pots freshly blooming while some previous ones are fading, this rhythm of life in the garden changes me and teaches me to see my dog's illness through different eyes. A garden as a material is very transformative. It has a similarity with ceramics - oddly they both have something to do with clays and the before and the after results are very different. I find it very satisfying when I see my planting schemes work after seasons of waiting. (Figs. 67-68)

In autumn 2016, my passion for my dog and for gardening finally came together, forming an installation for my solo exhibition *As I lay in 1000 ways: a Documemory*, from which I was able to develop new works toward the final Viva exhibition.



Figs: 67-68 Before and After : *Garden project* -2015 to 2017.



## ***As I lay in 1000 ways : a Documemory***

'You must not forget anything , (to my father)...if a man's not made of memory, he's made of nothing.

--- Phillip Roth. (1991:124). *Patrimony*

There are few artists making works about caretaking. There are art programmes for patients and people in care homes; there are artists who take care of their own diseases, artists who make work about HIV and so on. It was difficult for me to find a visual artist making work about caretaking. Literature and film perhaps address the topic more often. Michael Haneke and Philip Roth are two inspirational examples. While Haneke in his harsh, sharp sometimes disturbing yet enigmatic way describes an old couple's tragic and painful ending at their final hour in his brilliant film *Amour* (2012), Roth pours his unusual tenderness and humanity writing about his father's latest years in the autobiographical book *Patrimony* (1991). Both describe the hardship and the emotion as caretakers of their loved ones.

Taking care of an ill loved one is both mentally and physically demanding and sometimes frightening, especially when there is no one to help in the family, as in my case and the case of *Amour's* character. *Amour* won Michael Haneke his second Palme d'Or Award and showed he is a filmmaker of seriousness. It is a film about a couple who are retired music teachers in their eighties and how they confront death in their Paris apartment.

Film Critic Peter Bradshaw wrote:

*...as her condition deteriorates, Georges must care for Anne in the flat, without normal palliative care, until her final hour. Their apartment is to be their Calvary. Georges's face is etched not merely with the cares of age but with fear: the person whom he loved and loves is beginning to vanish before his eyes. (Bradshaw, 2012)*

Though I am in no way near the tragic state of Georges in *Amour* who did the unthinkable, I can deeply understand the suffering, frustration and loneliness of his situation. I can understand the close relationship that grows between the caretaker and the ill loved one and how the outside world becomes gradually irrelevant. Alongside my dog's deterioration, my health deteriorates too, and that becomes another point of identification. We are like two interdependent organisms, inseparable family.

Bradshaw also wrote:

*... As the situation advances, Haneke shows how the outside world begins to lose its meaning. A visit from the former pupil whose concert they had attended is well meant but*



*deeply misjudged; even his daughter and son-in-law Geoff become irrelevant to their barricaded existence. Georges and Anne are thrown back, almost primevally, on each other.*

My film *As I lay in 1000 ways: a Documemory* focuses on the story between myself and my dog. It is a three hour film I took over two weeks while I was in residency in Somerset in 2016. This film was made while I was nearly having an emotional breakdown when the hardship of taking care of my dog met the expectation of having to produce works for the estate as a condition of my residency. I resisted using filming as a grand statement. I focused instead on our relationship and small day to day caretaking details, ordinary people finding ourselves in special if not extraordinary circumstances. I wanted our personal story and the small understated records of daily life to tell a story of a larger society. Haneke's *Amour* is a chamber piece mostly about two characters. But as viewers we can invest our full attention in each minute detail of the impossible task Georges has to face and feel the menace and shock with the characters (even if one disagrees with the way it ends) ; it makes us contemplate our own vulnerability and the fact that if we live that long we may face the same dilemmas. The small scale and attention to mundane detail draws us in and makes possible our imaginative leap to what is universal.

Philip Roth's *Patrimony* is an honest documentary of his process of dealing with his father's cancer and taking care of him in his last years. While reading it, I was not thinking of my father's death but the experience of my dog's illness. My feelings toward my father's death and my dog's illness are somehow blurred into one in these care-taking years. It is my regret that I was not able to take care of my father when he was ill. I want to do it right this time. There is redemption in doing for my dog what I was not able to do for my father.

Although my film *As I lay in 1000 ways: a Documemory* is a story of hardship in mundane life, it is also full of the tenderness and love between two creatures. (Fig. 69) While we were in the kitchen for breakfast this Easter, I heard indigenous chanting music from the radio and started to dance. I tried to dance with my dog by coming up to his face and lowering my body to the floor; his watery eyes started to roll from side to side and got excited, with a serious attempt he shifted and flicked his front paws. So we kept on dancing. At that moment, I knew this would be the ending of that animation I am about to draw. This 'dancing incident' must be about the memories of us dancing together when he was younger and able; Favor was always a keen dancer. Even now when he is paralysed, he remembers the move; he is still the dog who wants to dance. I want to remember everything, so that in my works I can make loved ones come alive by casting, filming, photographing and drawing.



Fig. 69 Gloria Lin. 2016. Film stills of *As I lay in 1000 ways*.

## Chapter Five

### Three-Dimensional Space

#### 5.1 Projection and Installation

According to Claire Bishop, artists who work with multi-channel video like Yayoi Kusama and Mona Hatoum, Susan Hiller, Jane and Louise Wilson, Doug Aitken and Eija-Liisa Ahtila, often feature seductive images that appeal to imaginary identification. Bishop argues that the viewer's psychological absorption often is undercut by the physical awareness of our body and its relation to other people in the room. (Bishop. 2005: 75-76)

My video installation, *The Doors* (2014) is also facing this frustration that most viewers are aware of passers-by and reluctant to participate in sitting on the toilet seat while watching the video projection on the wall, although the toilet seat is the main part of the installation with which I hoped to activate viewers' spectatorship. (Fig. 70) After *The Doors*, I don't try to control the way viewers interact with my works anymore; I simply focus on making works the way I want them to be.



Fig. 70. Gloria Lin. 2014. *The Door*. London: Espacio Gallery. Installation View.



Bishop also believes the darkness of the cinema space removes us from the world, suspending us in an alternative reality where one forgets where one is sitting; the bright screen takes over the darkness while the outside world fades as the eyes probe the screen. (Bishop, 2005: 94). Since my projection installations need darker rooms, Bishop's theory that viewers could be removed from the world into alternative dark spaces is encouraging. I also received a similar feedback from my supervisor; she thought that a darker area in one of my solo exhibitions suits the temperament of my installation well.

Mona Hatoum works in multiple mediums combining painting, drawing, sculpture, sound, text, video, photography and light to create installations. I am also interested in mixing different mediums and, as in Hatoum's works, the freedom of association between references is essential.

In *Light at the End* (1989), *Light Sentence* (1992), *Home* (1999), and *Misbah* (2006) Hatoum works magic with light. In *Light Sentence* (1992), Hatoum uses a single light bulb controlled by a motor; by changing the height of the light source she is able to create a spectacular, disorienting room awash with moving shadows cast through two rows of mesh lockers, suggesting imprisonment, escape, interrogation, as well as splendour. (Fig.71)

Later in *Misbah* (2006-7), the Arabic term for lantern, Hatoum employed silhouettes of fighting soldiers punched onto a turning lantern; the light casts the silhouettes of armed soldiers circling the walls of the room. Again, viewers are disoriented and there is a mixing of seductive elegance and danger. (Fig 72 )

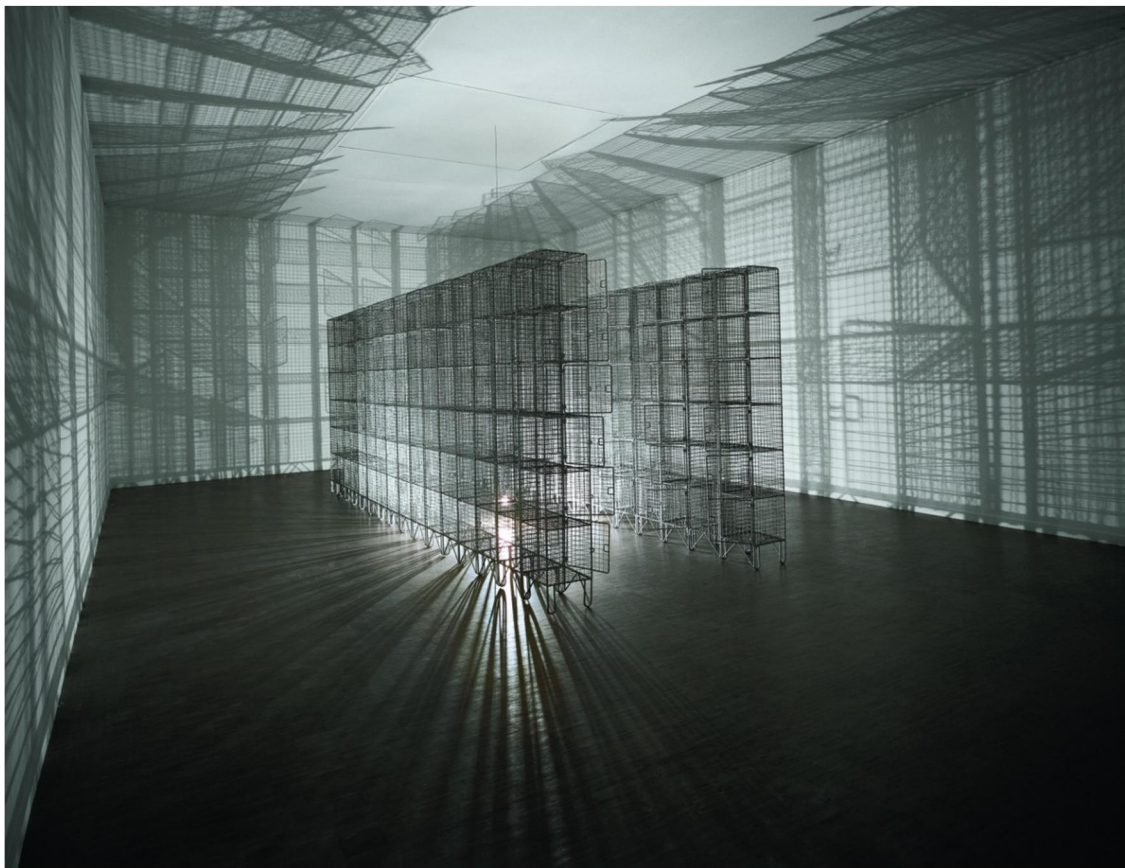


Fig 71 Mona Hatoum. 1992. *Light Sentence*. London: Tate Modern.



Fig. 72 Hatoum M. 2006-7. *Misbah*.

Light is a material which I have been fascinated by since I first installed projected video installations in 2014. I am passionate about the immersive character of light especially created by projected films; I see it as an original material which allows me to bring meanings to the spaces I create. This revelation was the result of my first solo exhibition (2015) when I put three video projection works in one area due to the shortage of the space which accidentally created a complete immersive experience. (Figs.: 73-74)



Figs. 73-74: Views at my first solo exhibition, *Lady in No. 5* (2015).

: I put three video projection works in one area due to the shortage of the space which accidentally created a complete immersive experience.



Understanding Mona Hatoum is immensely important to my practice: how she works with materials, assembles objects to create installations in enclosed spaces, and her ability to work with personal materials in a way that can connect to the general public. Clarrie Wallis, the Curator of Modern and Contemporary British Art at Tate Modern writes:

*'The importance of Hatoum's work lies in her ability to balance the specific and the general, to draw on particular culture and political contexts and to show how these are imbricated within wider, universal concerns'. (Wallis. 2016:15)*

Yayoi Kusama has a different approach when it comes to video installation and participatory art. In one of Kusama's installations in Tate Modern in 2012, *I am here but Nothing*, Kusama placed a small boxed TV showing the video of her chanting Japanese folk songs while gazing into the camera. The TV is placed in the setting of a cosy living room full of furniture. The room is joined by a dining area where furniture and everything in it is painted white. (Fig. 75) While the video plays, the folk song blends into another interactive installation, Obliteration Room, where viewers are invited to stick multi-coloured dots onto whatever objects they wish. (Figs: 76-77)



Fig. 75. Yayoi Kusama. 2000/2012 *I'm Here, but Nothing*. © Yayoi Kusama. Photograph by Lucy Dawkins for Tate Modern. London. 2012

The works of art which Nicolas Bourriaud categorises as 'relational' sets up viewers in a more collective activities rather than in private and individual spaces. Claire Bishop writes that relational art sets up situations in which viewers are addressed as a collective social

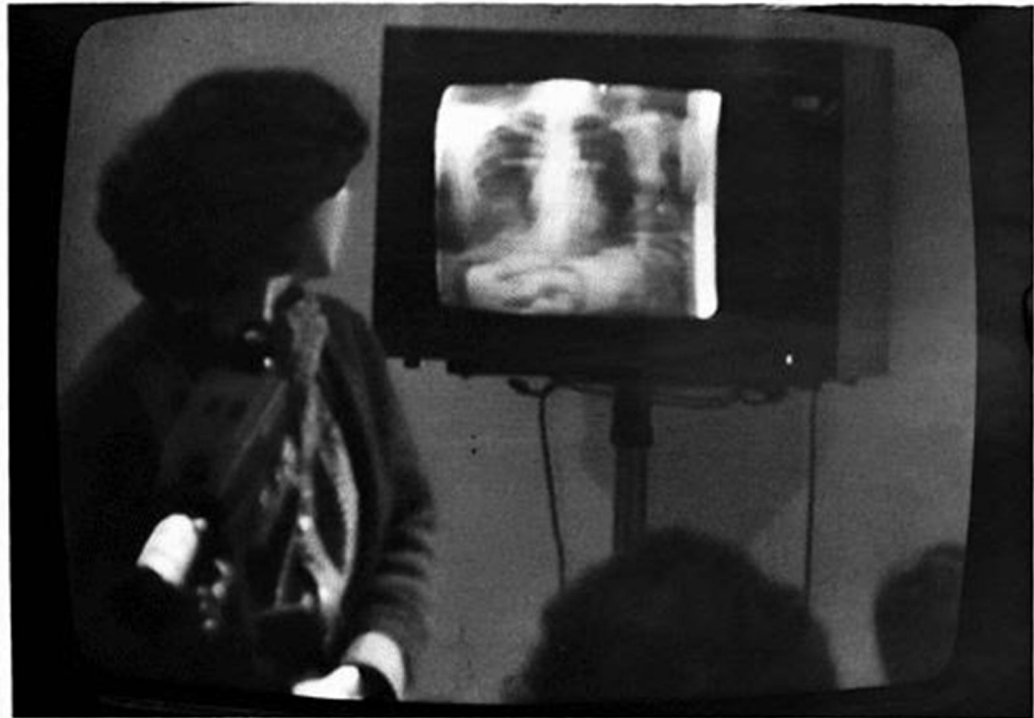
mass. To Bishop and Bourriaud, relational art is not simply an interactive art, it is a means of locating the practice within the culture at large. This prompts a desire for physical interaction between people, inspiring artists to adapt a DIY approach and to model their own 'possible universe.' (Bishop. 2005)



Figs. 76-77: Before and after of *The Obliteration Room* by Yayoi Kusama. 2012. London: Tate Morden. Photographs copyright: Mark Sherwood/Rex Features/Ota Fine Arts, Tokyo.



In her video work, instead of documenting a performance, Hatoum uses the medium as a filter to delay the happenings to another time and space which challenge viewers' perceptions. Two works are examples for me of how Hatoum understands the video form. In *Don't Smile, you are on camera!* (1980), the artist pointed her camera at audiences and their images were displayed live on a monitor in the same room; the camera came up close to body parts of audiences then the images were cut and faded to two nude assistants behind the wall, pointing their cameras at their own naked body parts. (Figs.: 78- 79).



Figs: 78-79 Mona Hatoum. 1980. *Don't Smile, you are on camera!*.



Fifteen years later, in *Pull* (1995), Hatoum was performing live in the same space with the viewers. Her facial expression was projected onto a monitor installed above a hank of hair hanging in a boxed-frame in a wall. The set-up invited viewers to pull the hair, which seemed unconnected to a human being. When they did so, the artist's face responded on the monitor, confusing viewers as to what was real in the here and now and what was simulated on a screen. (Fig. 80 )

How Hatoum masters light, space and using video not just to film but also to filter viewers' perception is truly inspiring and exciting.

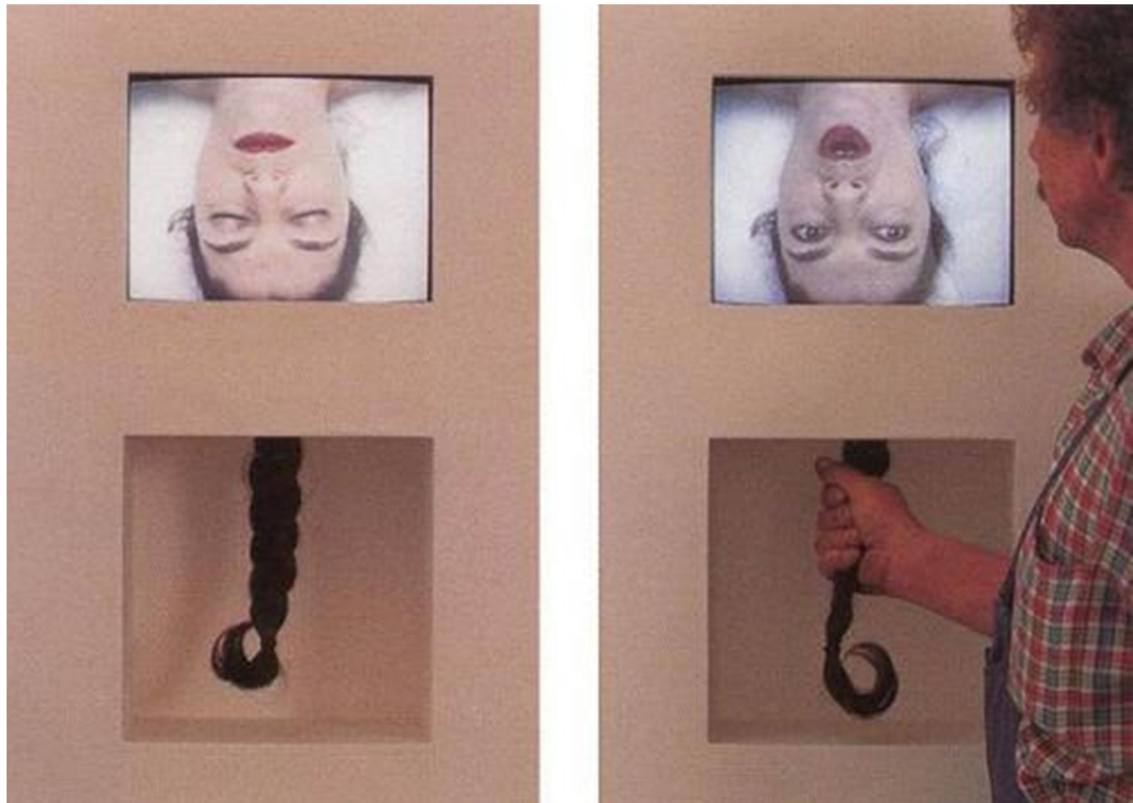


Fig. 80 Hatoum. 1995. *Pull*.

### Video Art Renewed

The contemporary art world is often inspired by works from the past, updating them with new mediums, techniques or technologies. Examples in video and installation art are: Turkish artist Refik Anadol's *Infinity Room* (2015) could be the child of Kusama's *Phalli's Field* (1965) and *Infinity Mirrored Room* (2012) by sharing the elements of mirrors and light in a room space. Pipilotti Rist's *Worry Will Vanish* (2014) could be a modern version of Gustav Metzger's *Liquid Crystal Environment* (1965), visually if not conceptually; it is interesting to see even the arrangement of seats on the floor are similar in both works. (Figs: 81, 82)



Fig.81 Installation view of Pipilotti Rist 's *Worry Will Vanish*, London: Hauser & Wirth.2014  
Photo: Alex Delfanne.© Pipilotti Rist

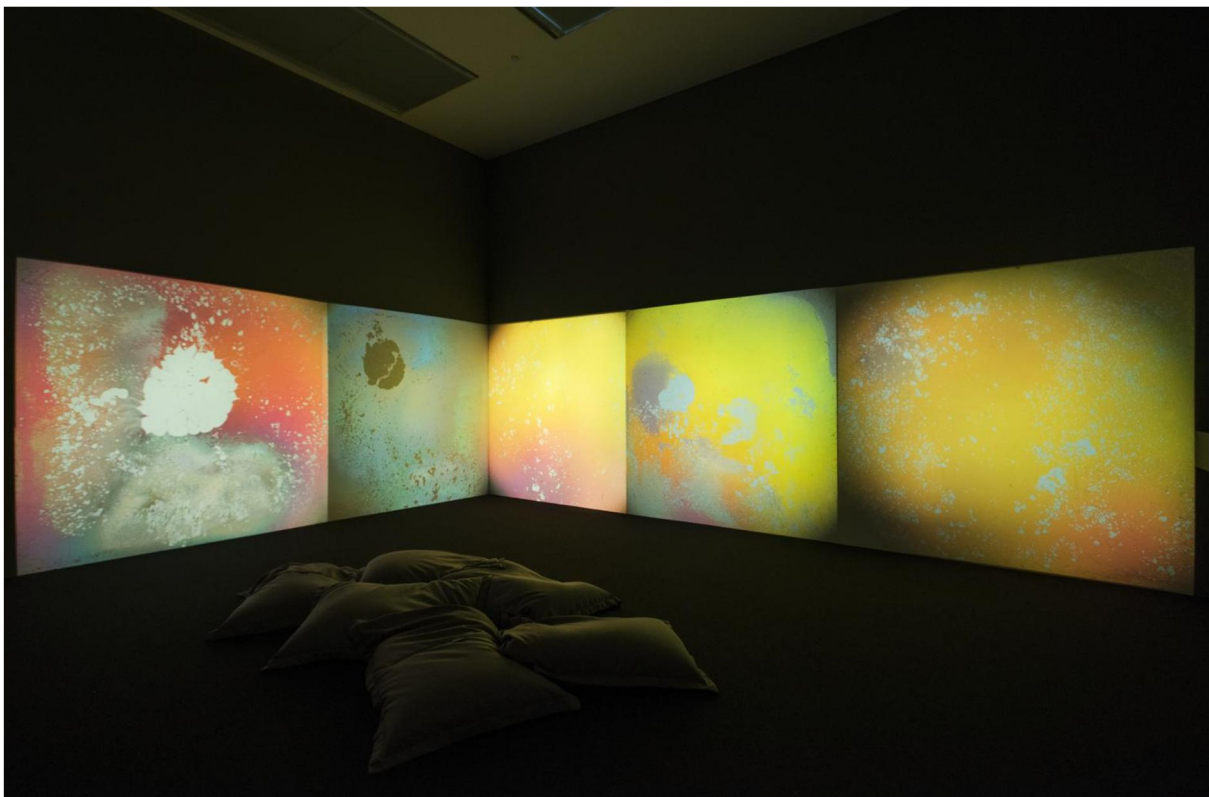


Fig. 82 Gustav Metzger. 1965. *Liquid Crystal Environment*; remade 2005. Image copyright  
London: Tate and © Gustav Metzger

The latest projection technology brings in a new generation of video art made by artists or teams for galleries and commercial establishments around the world. In recent years, there have been waves of large video projection works since the first Facade projection of Sydney Opera House in 2012. (Fig. 83) Following this spectacular vision, the scale and technique was soon adapted by many iconic buildings in various events.

By projecting video images onto buildings and landmarks, Buckingham Palace was transformed into street of terraced houses in a light show for Diamond Jubilee (2012); St. Peter's Basilica was turned into a huge screen with images of animals for the Vatican to highlight, coinciding with the climate meeting in Paris 2015; Edinburgh Castle and Castle Rock were adapted as a canvas for an animation of 350 million years of Edinburgh's history- *Deep Time* to open Edinburgh International Festival 2016 and White Cliffs of Dover was becoming a night cinema celebrating Dame Vera's 100th birthday with the projection of her documentary film with that famous song. These large productions are not identified as 'art' but nonetheless form the landscape in which contemporary artists are working.



Fig. 83. '*Lighting the Sails*' at the Opera House. 2012. Commissioned by: Vivid Sydney. Premiered on 25th of May 2012 in the context of Vivid Sydney. Photo Credit: Black Diamond Images.zenfolio.com

Video technology became available in the late 1960s and early 70s and since then companies like teamLab (Japan), Ocubo (Portugal) and numerous global artists have joined in the flood of creative exploration in Video art: Patrice Warrener's Chromolithe projection projects (France), Jennifer Steinkamp's early 1990s video projection works to her latest large



video piece *Botanic* (2015) in Time Square, and Bill Viola's *Buried Secrets* in 46th Biennale of Venice 1995 and his latest Florence exhibition (2017) which shows two decades of video installations next to the works of the old masters.

The Swiss artist Pipilotti Rist also shifts her focus to the use of projection to create installations. Although her latest solo exhibition *Pipilotti Rist: Pixel Forest* at New Museums, New York (2017) included some of her earlier video and performance pieces, it was mainly about the new video and multimedia installations.

The New Museum's catalogue stated:

*Her (Rist's) mesmerizing works envelop viewers in sensual, vibrantly colored kaleidoscopic projections that fuse the natural world with the technological sublime... Rist maintains a deep sense of curiosity that pervades her explorations of physical and psychological experiences. Her works bring viewers into unexpected, all-consuming encounters with the textures, forms, and functions of the living universe around us. (Gioni M. 2016)*

*Worry Will Vanish*, a large participatory video installation (Fig. 81) shown in Hauser & Wirth (2014) invited viewers to lie on large pillows in the space made by two giant projected high-ceilinged walls which created a three-dimensional cinema with surrounding music in the background. The video showed images of the natural world, the human body and organs at different scales, from the panoramic to the microscopic. These images were made of patterns and colours heavily borrowing from nature and seemed somehow devoid of specific meanings, being more about the overall sensual experience and spectatorship of the setting.

Through understanding the spectacular new world of video art, I want to remind myself that what matters to me is not technical sensationalism or novelty, but the substance of the concept and how it is shaped and presented. As a video artist, I believe projection and light technologies are in the service of artistic practice; I want to make works that bear concepts and meanings of concern to me and hopefully to others: substance before spectatorship.

### Space: A Three-Dimensional Memory

In Tarkovsky's films, landscapes were the main characters in their own right. He investigated the locations with scenes that speak a great deal of hidden meanings.

Writer Phillip Lopate writes about Tarkovsky's work:

*'Though he made only seven features, thwarted by Soviet censors and then by cancer, each honoured his ambition to crash through the surface of ordinary life and find a larger spiritual meaning, to heal modern art's secular fragmentation by infusing it with metaphysical dimension.'* (Lopate. 2002.)

Tarkovsky weaves stories and characters from start to finish through travelling between the landscape and ruins, through changing of the weather, through places where nature is enclosed in the interior of a building. Memory and landscape are like two sides of a coin in his earlier films. (Figs. :84-85)



Fig. 84. Film still of *Stalker*. 1979. Tarkovsky



Fig. 85. Film still of *Stalker*. 1979. Tarkovsky.



Fig. 86. Film Still *Nostalgia*. 1983. Tarkovsky.

Tarkovsky's first five films were all made in his homeland Russia. *Nostalgia* (1983) is the first film he made outside of Russia, shot and made in Italy. It is a film about a dying Russian poet travelling to Italy for his research of an eighteenth century Russian musician. While in Italy, the poet was constantly visited by his memories of his family, his wife in Russia; he was and uninterested in Italy's landscapes. The character retreats into a quiet spa hotel room. Italy's landscape doesn't seem to inspire Tarkovsky as much as his homeland does in his earlier



films; instead, he made imaginary landscapes to replace Italy's landscape in most of the iconic scenes in *Nostalgia*. (1983) This shift in Tarkovsky's film language may be the result of his exile and displacement.(Fig.86) Dreamlike landscapes eventually become main characters in most of his films. Tarkovsky's visual artistry has been very inspiring, his films are what I always come back to when seeking inspiration.

Inspired by works of Tarkovsky', each of my installation work is like a three-dimensional film of memories. In *Kitchen Story* (2014), *Lady and her dog* (2015), *The Wedding* (2016) and *As I lay in 1000 ways: a Documemory* (2017), I created spaces that allowed viewers to walk into, around and through an imaginative field of my life. I approach installations as though I am dealing with three-dimensional versions of memories. I wish to bring memories into physical space through installations.

My memories are in a 'space-format.' When I remember, I visualise the spaces that confine or define me, the spaces that free me, the places I made home, the spaces I want to escape from, and landscapes that haunt me. This tendency of mine to approach memories in three-dimensional visions has led me toward installation and work involving film and projection. It also affects the way I archive my works. Since 2015, I have made a series of virtual reality tours of my own exhibitions and the shows I have curated for others. In my viva exhibition I will use projected documentary video and the light of film to create imaginary three-dimensional stories. The hope is that my own re-worked and shaped memories will evoke the viewers to contemplate their own memories as well as the nature of memory itself.

## 5.2 Venice. London. Viva

### Venice

After developing a series of installation works, I took a painting residency in Venice in spring 2015. Venice Art House had offered studio space and two exhibitions on the condition of donating some paintings that I made in the residency period. Alongside everyday studio practice, I also produced a series of scroll paintings and documentary films while I was in Venice. These films are the starting point for my *Memory Landscape* series (2015 and on-going).

There were four moments in my life when I was engulfed by spaces which transformed my perspective and have haunted me ever since: in the Guggenheim in New York (2003); deep diving in Bali's ocean (2005); confronted by the sight of thousands of Bell and Crown jellyfishes in Monterey Bay's Open Sea exhibition (in my twenties); and finally, the experience of being in Venice.

Before the Venice residency, I had started a collection of documentary films shot in London and Scotland while I was revisiting places that carry deep personal meanings. All of these films were shot in the continuous tracking shot or stop-motion style without much cutting; I captured the train and boat journeys or trips made by foot in long continuous shots with a hand-held camera; each film was made in one or a few very long shots in order to preserve real-time details in memory.

Later in my solo exhibition in 2016, I projected the film *Venice: Memory Landscape* on waves of soft white fabric made in the same way I created the three dimensional 'river' in my *Wedding* installation. The film was about how the view of Venice's massive body of water helped me to overcome my anxiety of being away from my ill dog. The *Memory Landscape* series is not about landscapes but what a make-believe landscape-installation can evoke for viewers as continuous scenes of a boat journey are projected onto the wavy shapes in a large space. (Figs: 87-88)

After this exhibition I considered bringing the visual scale up and projecting onto more of these uneven white surfaces, to make the installation even more enveloping, 'larger than life'. It is important to me to use my personal experiences to evoke something viewers can recognise and relate to for themselves. I want to convey the awe and wonder that I felt in Venice. But there is a more 'universal' meaning to these images as well, because Venice is a sinking city, crumbling and constantly needing to be 'saved' from being lost under the water. This relates to our sense of the past and our effort to save and preserve the past in the present.



Figs: 87-88 Gloria Lin. 2016. *Memory Landscape Series: Venice*. Installation view.



## London

Memory believes before knowing remembers.

--- William Cuthbert Faulkner. 1930. *As I Lay Dying*.

The physical and mental challenges of taking care of my dog alongside my studio practice are daunting. While we were in the Somerset Residency, as in every other night since his deterioration, I was awakened in the middle of the night by my dog's condition. After I cleaned him, I was again physically and mentally broken and tired. I looked at my dog who was now sound asleep and I started to draw him. That night, I had a vision for my solo exhibition. I wanted to document my dog's last few years, and I wanted this show to open out and expose my private world. I gave the project a name, *As I lay in 1000 ways*. In that moment of breakdown, I started to document us by filming; from that morning on, I brought the camera with us whenever we were and kept the camera rolling for the rest of the residency.

Back in London, I started to build a series of works around this time-lapse film. The solo exhibition, *As I lay in 1000 ways: a Documemory* was my chance to showcase the *Landscape Memory Series* with these latest works. The gallery provided a tall-ceilinged open space at street level, a large upper platform and a small darkroom space; the different levels of light in each space offered a perfect condition for my different works.

In this exhibition, I didn't want to project films as films; films for me are part of installations – the filmed images can occupy a physical space rather than just exist on a wall or screen. In this way I ally myself with some of the installation video artists discussed above. I also wanted to use materials that speak to my emotions: glasses, pills, projected light of the film, rice, soil and plants; I wanted to see how small objects could hold a space and how repetitive elements occupy a space in my various works. I hoped that this tension between the matter and space in the installation would transport viewers to their own inner space.

The new film *As I lay in 1000 ways* was in the small darkened room at the back of the gallery. I placed a small garden in a white wooden baby crib at the centre of the room. The film was projected onto the back wall in a continuous loop; the full film is about 3 hours. Visitors could walk into the installation in their own time and stay as long as they desired. Each person experienced different sections of the film; the rapid time-lapse film tells the life of my dog and myself day and night, in a living area, a bedroom and in a kitchen. (Figs: 89-91)



Figs: 89-90 Gloria Lin. 2016. Installation Views of *As I lay in 1000 ways*.



Fig. 91. *As I lay in 1000 ways* 2016, installation view . London: Gallery 11. Truman Brewery.



## Viva exhibition

After several years of exhibiting experience, I have been able to reflect on feedback from thousands of viewers. This led me to believe that when my stories are put in a gallery, the public space becomes personal to them; my hope is that my stories in turn become personal to the viewers. I have considered ways I could encourage this to happen in my Viva exhibition.

I want to reclaim the space in the middle of a gallery, to make the public space intimate by sensitively dealing with the light and by bringing nature (garden) elements to the indoor spaces. Unlike sculptures which are viewed from the outside, installations are more like architecture which is experienced from inside as well as outside. I care a lot about having an entrance-piece to open up each exhibition, for example, a nostalgic journey is one of the ways to get into a space; like taking the steam engine Flying Scotsman which would bring me into a place of mind before I arrive to my final destination.

I am inspired by the aesthetics of architecture in Japan and Asia. How a building relates to the surrounding area (mountains or rivers for instance), what a person sees before entering a space and how different layers of a building reveal themselves, are very much part of our cultural attitude toward the places we live in. This aesthetic combined with my exhibiting experiences has influenced how I will plan and set up my final exhibition.

After discussion with my supervisors, three of the works from my latest solo show (2016) will be further developed in the final viva exhibition. They are *Venice: Memory Landscape*, *as I lay in 1000 ways* and *1000 Days*. The aim is to construct human stories through videos, photographs and drawings in installations. I want to use the projected light of my films on, over and around the three-dimensional objects and alongside garden elements, to create an imaginary space, and hopefully an evocative experience for viewers.

## Chapter Six

### Professional Practices

#### 6.1 Studio Practice

##### Solo Exhibitions:

1. **2016 Nov** *as I lay in 1000 ways: a Documemory*. Gallery 11, Truman Brewery , London.
2. **2015 Oct** *Lady in No. 5* Gallery 12, Truman Brewery, London.

*As I lay in 1000 ways: a Documemory* is a solo exhibition containing series of new installations and two dimensional works which deal with the everyday and comment on loss and human existence. *Lady in No 5* is my first solo exhibition showcasing works from 2013-2015. ( Figures are in pages 94-98 )

The two galleries are in the centre of east London; each solo exhibition attracted more than 1,200 visitors. These solo shows are the birth place for new works, they serve as prequels for future series; exhibitions push me to work toward deadlines, which benefit my practice. Exhibitions allow me to set up my work in real spaces which is very important for an installation artist. Most of installations are plans on papers and objects in parts before they could be set up which has always involved a lot of budget. It is always a revelation when I can finally see the work realised in a real space.



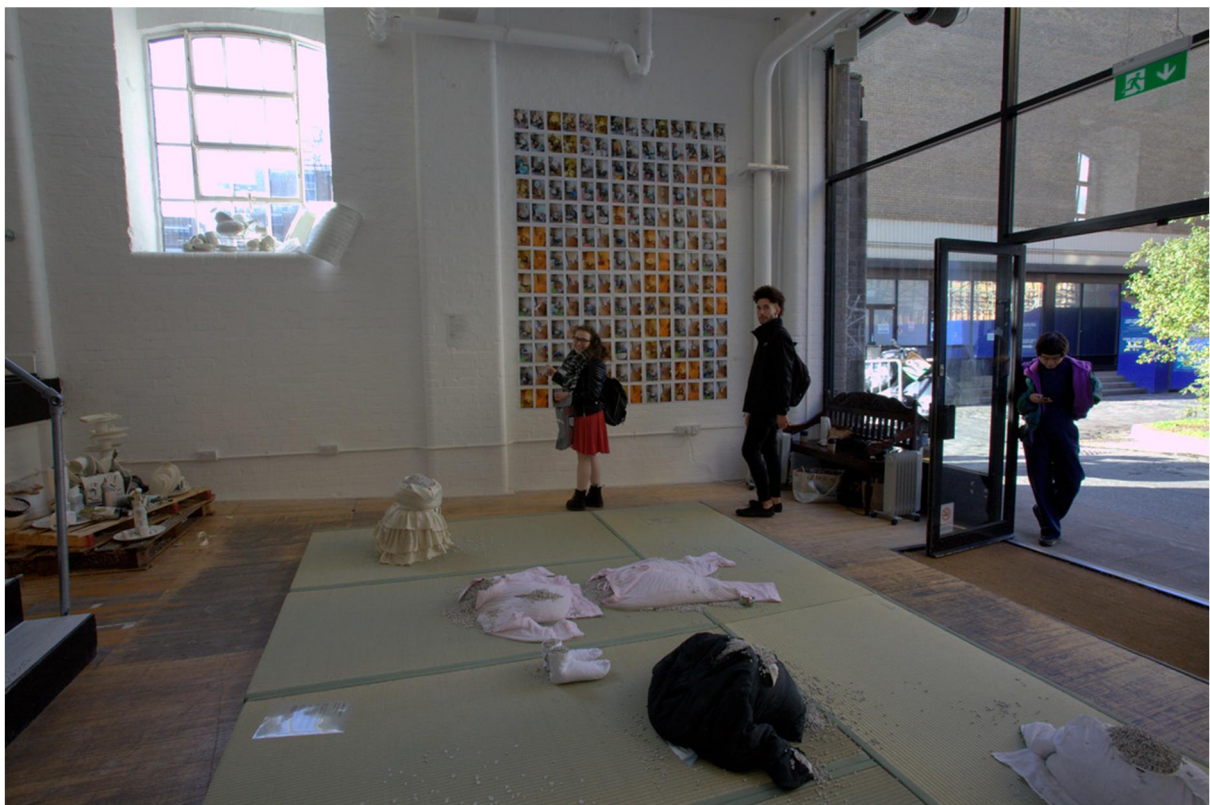


*As I lay in 1000 ways: a Documemory Solo exhibition view.* 2016. London: Dray Walk Gallery  
11. Truman Brewery. London





*As I lay in 1000 ways: a Documemory Solo exhibition view.* 2016. London: Dray Walk Gallery  
11 Truman Brewery. London



*Lady in No. 5* Solo exhibition view. 2015. London: Dray Walk Gallery 12. Truman Brewery.





*Lady in No. 5* Solo exhibition view. 2015. London: Dray Walk Gallery 12. Truman Brewery.



**Joint exhibitions:**

1. 2018 March *International fine Art Exchange Association for Paralympic Winter Games* in South Korea.
2. 2016 12 Oct – 08 November The 28<sup>th</sup> IFAEA, *International Fine Art Exchange Association*, Curator: Han (한 봉 호 국 내 원 로 작 가 ), H. Maru Gallery, Seoul, Korea ( Sponsored by the Seoul district Prosecutor , Korea)

*The Boy*. (2016) was exhibited in this group show and will be continuing traveling to show in a exhibition also curated by Mr. Han for the Paralympic Winter Games in South Korea, 2018.



Gloria Lin. (2016). *The Boy*. Acrylic and mould medium on fine art paper.  
72.7x60.0 cm

3. 2015 April *Flashback : Eve-a* video installation, *Morning Archive* and selected Sculptures, Curator Ana Cockerill, Espacio Gallery, London.
4. 2015 February A part of *White Chapel Gallery-First Thursdays "Across Boundaries"* : *The Doors* installation. Curator Ana Cockerill, Espacio Gallery, London.

5. 2014 Aug *MA Fine Art Showcase*: Five installations: sculptures, immersive space, etchings, film and photography works. AVA building, UEL London.
6. 2013 Feb "*Gaze*" : *Morning Archive series*, 11 sculptures and photography works. Espacio Gallery , London.
7. 2013 "*Contrast*": Two portraiture oil paintings, Espacio Gallery, London.
8. 2013 *2nd annual contemporary portraiture: "A Family Album painting Series"* and installation art film "*Face*" 10:24 , digital film, Espacio, London.
9. 2013 March~April "*Gazing Around*" : 7 drawings and paintings. Espacio Gallery. London.
10. 2012 July *Designers' Runway Show: Collection-The disappearance of a garden by Shizico Yi* , Latitude Festival Waterfront Stage, Henham Park, UK.
11. 2012 "*NO NOW*": *Self-portrait 2012*, mix medium and oil on canvas. Space Station 65, South Bank, London.
12. 2010 Jun-Nov "*Bling*" : "*Emotional*", head jewellery design piece, mix-media and metal. Victoria and Albert Museum of childhood, London.

## 6.2 Curatorial Practice

### What can artists do in a time like this?

No barking art : No Barking aRt is a not-for-profit art production project. Many good artists lack opportunities to show their work to the public. Over the past four years, I have created a platform and exhibitions helping independent artists to get their long awaited recognition. The project has created some successful large exhibitions, each show attracted thousands visitors. ( figures are in pages 102-110: in chronical order-from 2016 to 2014)

1. **2016 August** 2nd *no barking aRt Biennale : Potato Eaters*, Espacio Gallery, London.
2. **2015 November** *Educating Picasso* , Espacio Gallery, London .
3. **2014 Spring** 1<sup>st</sup> *no barking aRt biennale , Material World part I and II*  
*part I* , Truman Brewery, London  
*part II* , Espacio Gallery. London

### Curatorial Project Introduction

#### **Potato Eaters 2016**

Following my first two curatorial projects in *Material World 2014* which attracted over 6,000 visitors, I continued to curate this 2nd *no barking aRt biennale Potato Eaters* featuring some of the returning artists and also showing the winners of *no barking aRt Prize* from 2014.

**Educating Picasso 2015** is an exhibition devoted to artists who are also teachers.

I developed a new system of exhibition archive which was tested and realised for this show and it's now a template for future exhibition archiving. This has inspired me to digitalise and create a large website database for my own work archive.





*Potato Eaters* (2016) no barking aRt, curated and produced by Gloria Lin/ Shizico Yi





*Potato Eaters* (2016) no barking aRt, curated and produced by Gloria Lin / Shizico Yi



Artists interviewed and recorded their projects at the show, *Potato Eaters* (2016)  
no barking aRt, curated and produced by Gloria Lin / Shizico Yi



**Illustration**  
Rob Phillips

**Painting**  
Liz Derbyshire  
Kevin Derbyshire  
Mikey Georgeson  
Paul Helliwell  
LuLu Hancock  
Dusanka Marsenic  
Gideon Pain

**Printmaking**  
Glen Marston

**Photograph**  
Janol Apin  
Giacomo Cannata  
Georgina Howard  
Hannes Lin  
Peter Searle

**Architecture Design**  
Ana Araujo

**Sculpture**  
John Humphreys

**Multimedia**  
Marc Coker  
Lawrence Mathias

**Installations**  
Carmen Aleman  
Ana Cockerill  
Tony Smith  
Dean Todd



no barking aRt presents

# educating picasso

22 contemporary masters who educate a generation of artists of our time

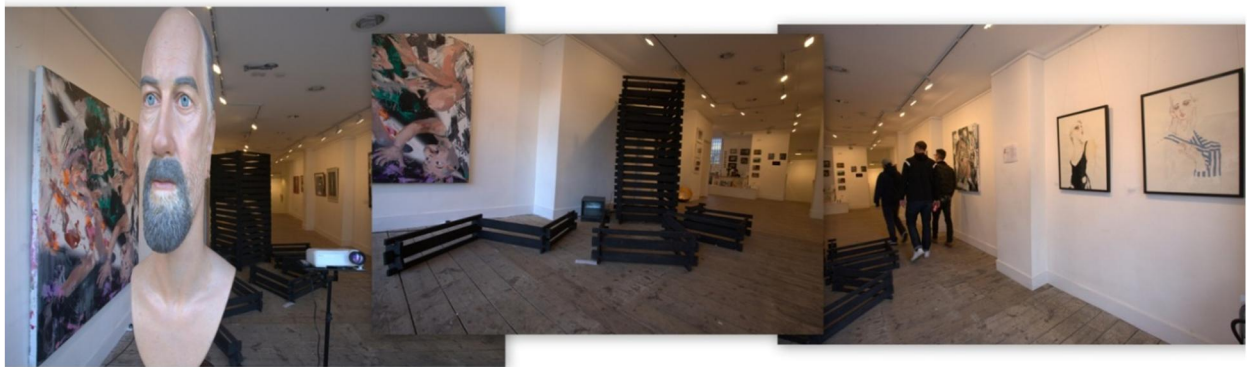
curator shizico yi



24 Nov 2015 Tuesday 6-9 pm **opening party**  
exhibition runs till 29 Nov, Sunday 5pm

**espaciogallery**

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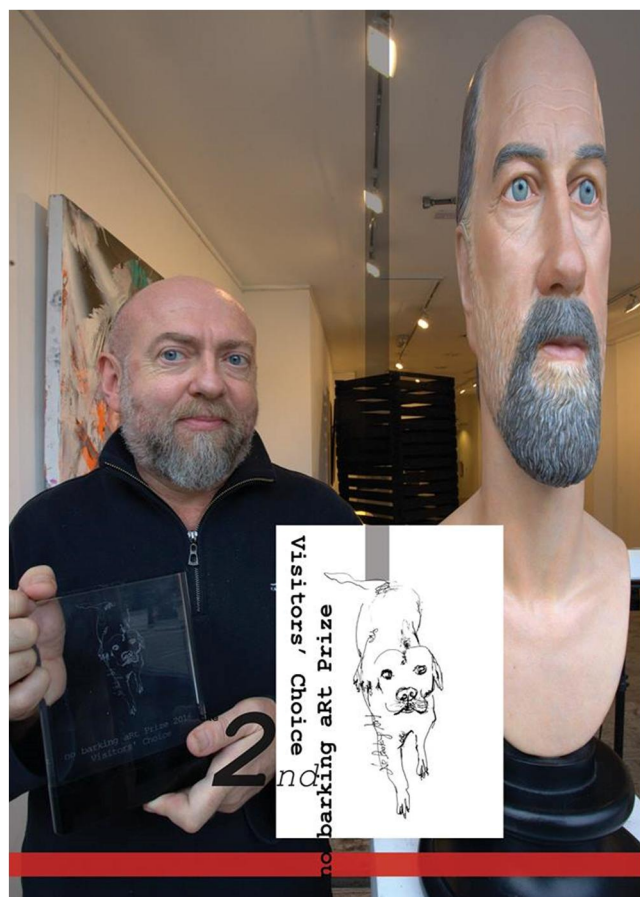


*Educating Picasso* (2015) no barking aRt, curated and produced by Gloria Lin / Shizico Yi.



*Educating Picasso* (2015) no barking aRt, curated and produced by Gloria Lin/ Shizico Yi.





*Educating Picasso. (2015). no barking aRt.*  
Curated and produced by Gloria Lin / Shizico Yi.









1<sup>st</sup> no barking aRt Biennale (2014) no barking aRt, curated and produced by Gloria Lin / Shizico Yi.





1<sup>st</sup> no barking aRt Biennale (2014) no barking aRt, curated and produced by Gloria Lin.



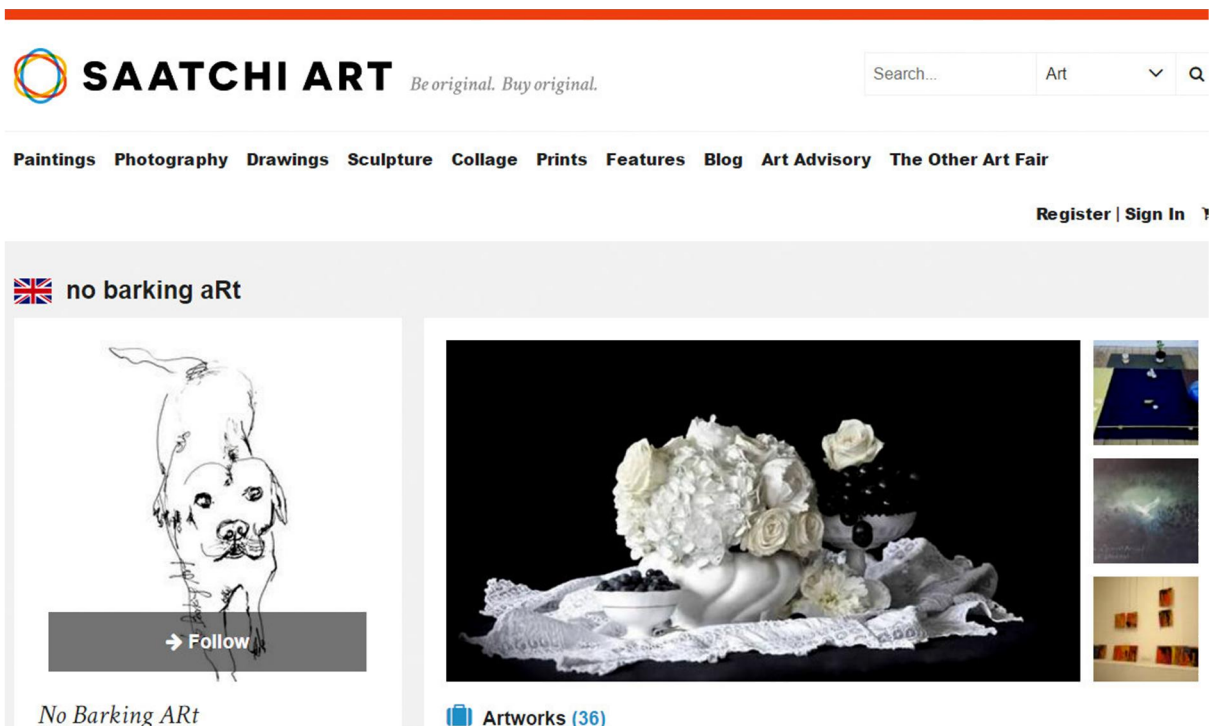
## On|no barking aRt website development:

1. Three-dimensional Walking-about virtual reality tour on-line archive: VR tour which is now also realised by other establishments: for examples, RA in Dec 2015, National Gallery and Buckingham Palace early this year. The initial concept was seeded from 2011 when I saw a *Google art project* touring over 60 museums around the world. Since early 2015 I have documented my curated exhibitions in virtual reality tour on-line.<sup>5</sup>



Fig. A view from the ceiling in Virtual Reality tour. Art work by Dean Todd, a performance piece for *Potato Eaters* 2016 no barking aRt.

2. Artworks are published on Saatchi Art to showcase artists in each exhibition. This global platform serves as an exhibition catalogue in a permanent public domain on-line as well as helping artists sale their works on-line through Saatchi Art.



## **Benefits from the curatorial experiences:**

### **1.Objectivity in installation decisions**

The curation sharpened my sensitivity in displaying other people's work in a small space. I learned objectivity about how to install my own work through making decisions about other artists' work.

### **2. Three dimensional documentation**

From my frustration in documenting my solo exhibition in three dimensions in October, I decided to create a virtual reality walk-through of this curated show. I researched this process. British Airways had made the first visual tour of an airport; I contacted the person responsible for this and negotiated a minimal fee for him to finish the shooting and the 3D webpage. Since then, we have been created three virtual reality tours for my exhibitions and published on-line for everyone to have a walk-through experience.

### **3.Hologram and use of new materials**

I had developed the idea of using a hologram on a glass table in the showcase exhibition 2015. During this curated show, I made the first public display of a hologram projection onto the glass front of the gallery. The work of the twenty two artists was projected in hologram form, linked to a collaboration with a poet who wrote a sentence specifically in relation to each artist's work.

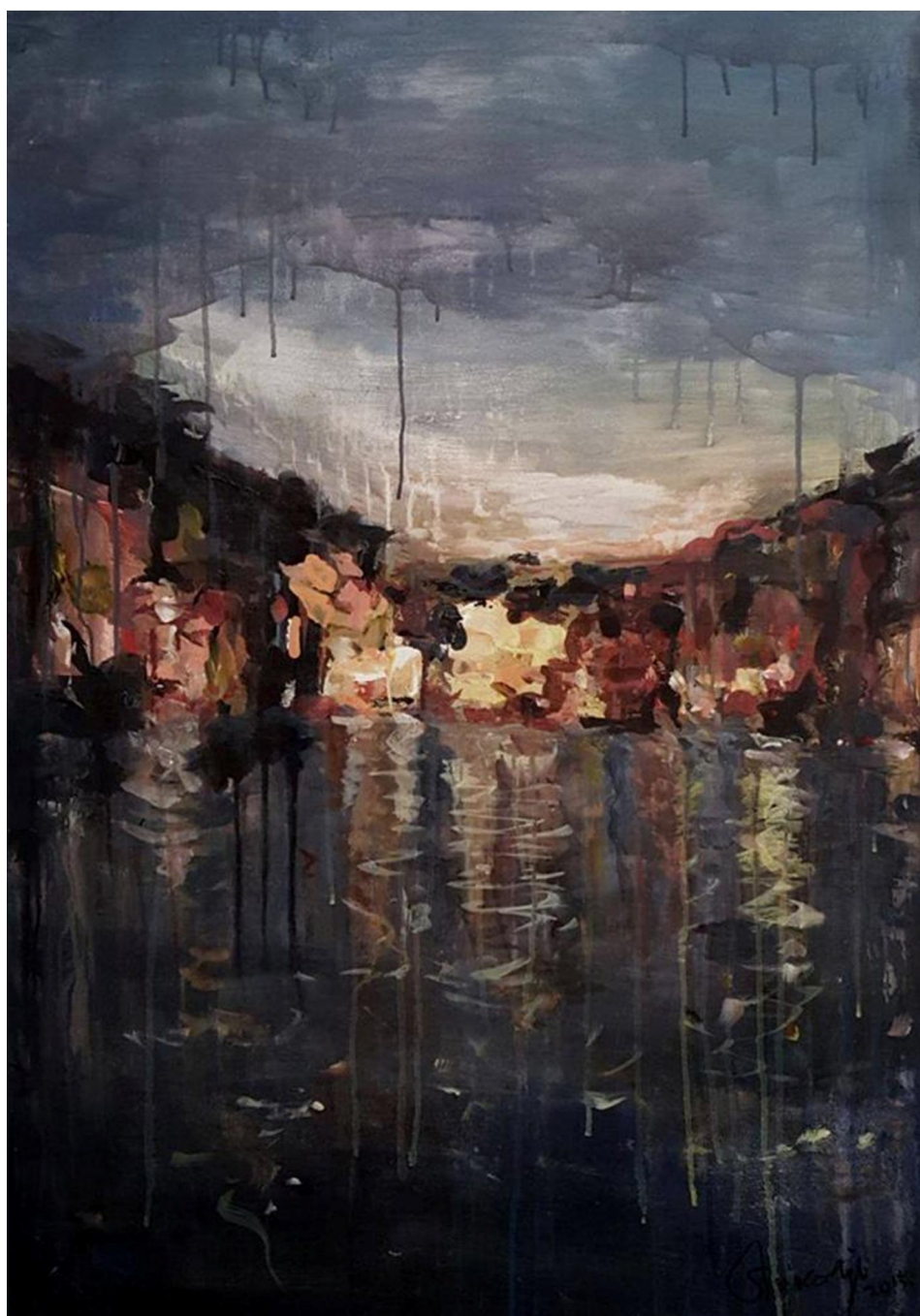


I installed a hologram projection onto the glass front of the gallery.*Educating Picasso* (2015).

### 6.3 Residencies, On-line Digital Work Archive and Others

#### Residencies

1. Somerset Yeo Farm Estate, UK. (Sep 2016) (more details on Chapter Five: 90.)
2. Venice Art House, Italy (Mar 2015) : Studio and two exhibitions : exhibited three works- *Concerto in the night* (Acrylic-fig. below ), *Eve*(film) and *Morning Archive* (collage and acrylic) (figs are in pages 114-115)



Gloria Lin (2015) *Concerto in the night*. canvas on board, 92x70 cm.





Venice Art House Residency and exhibited three works,  
one of which is *Eve 2015* (video installation), picture above.



Venice Art House: exhibited three works,  
one of which is *Morning Archive* 2015 (Collage and acrylic), picture above.

## On-line Digital Work Archive

I have an ambitious concept to build a comprehensive to date digital archive on-line which means all of my works are available on-line for public to access. This includes the digital films, installations, two dimensional works and virtual reality tour for my exhibitions.

It took me over two years painstakingly building the archive (2013-2017 and on-going), digitalising them and make the website myself. This digital archive is finished in Jan 2017 and available to everyone. (See Figs on pages 116-117)

<http://www.shizicoyi.com/work-archive.html>

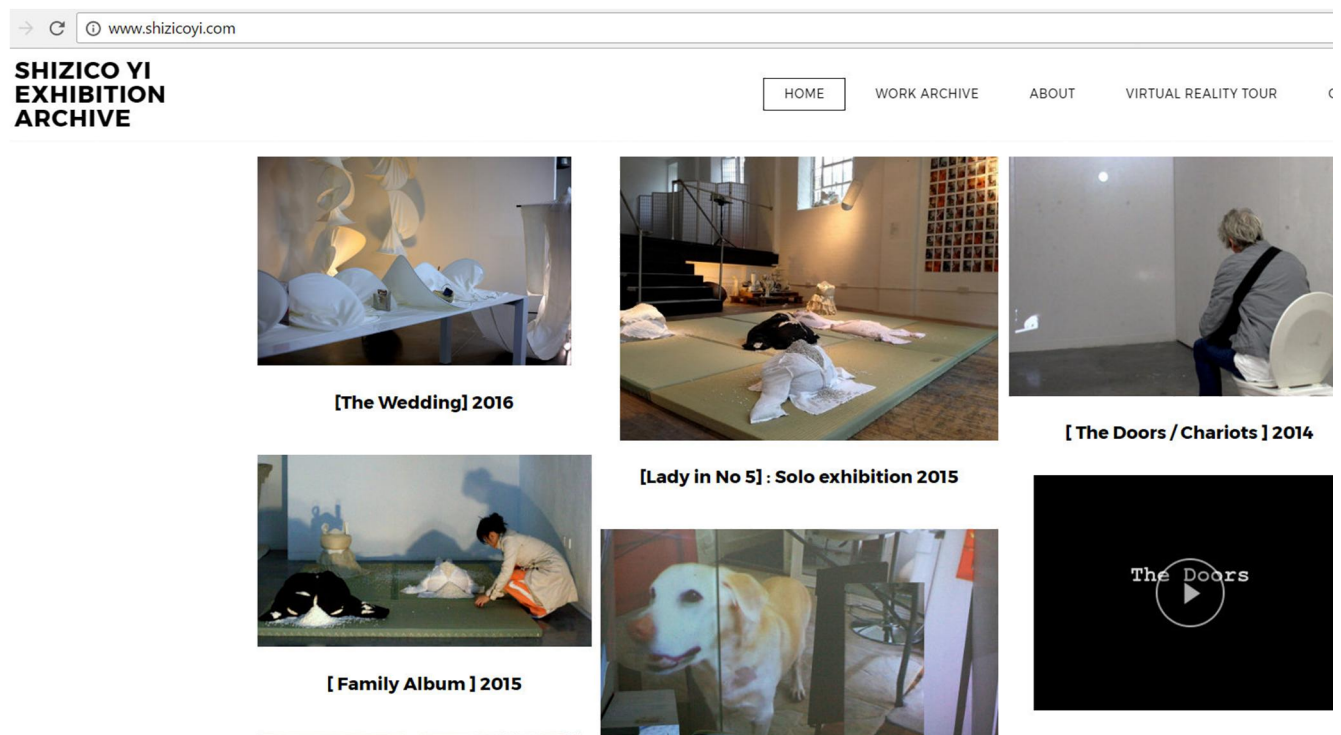


Fig. On-line digital archive sample page 2016-17



# Virtual Tour

Solo Exhibition view 2016

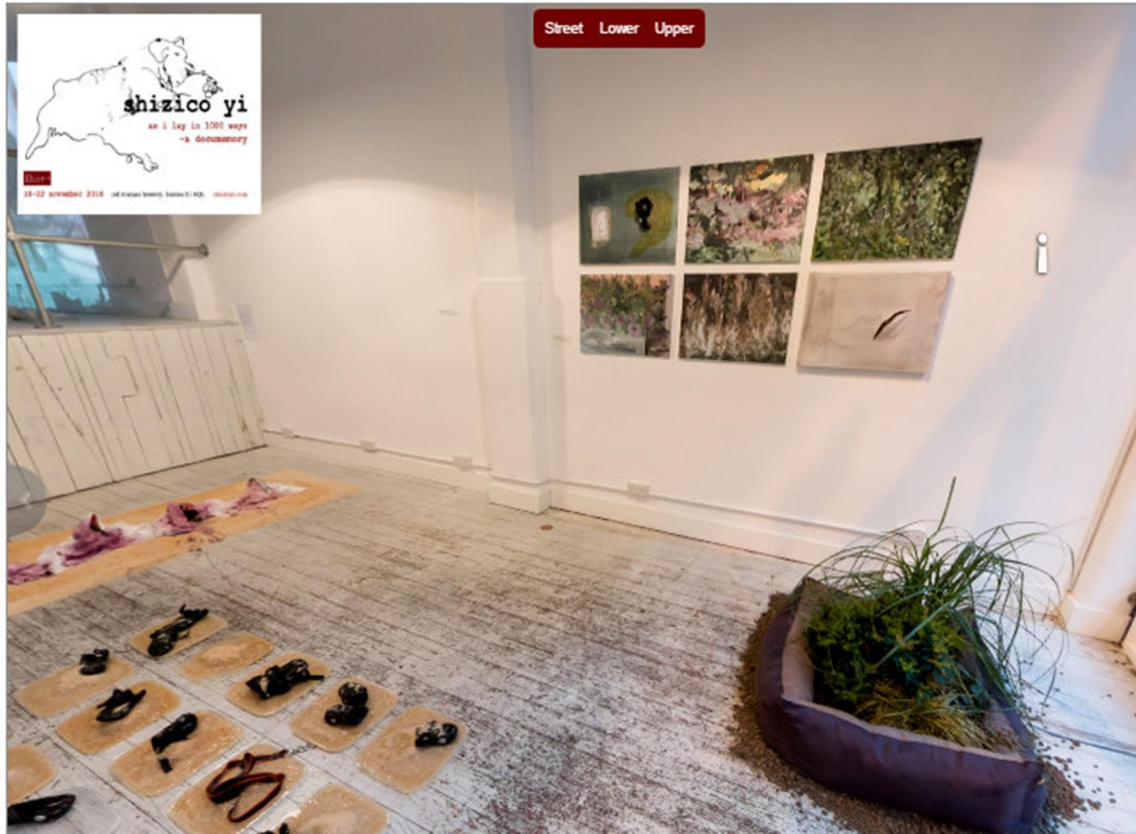


Fig. On-line digital archive: Exhibition Virtual Reality Tour. 2016

## Awards:

1. 2014 *International Film Festival of Wales*, pre-selection . *Face*, short film, 10 minutes.
2. 2013 *Winner of Women Film Makers: Best Shorts Competition 2013 Face*: short film, 10 minutes
3. 2012 *Saatchi's Young Master collection*: Curated by Rebecca Wilson , Screen-mono print *From Matisse to Hokusai* No. 5
4. 2012 July Finalists : *Bite, artist making prints*, The Mall Gallery, London. *From Matisse to Hokusai* series-two works were selected.

5. 2010 Longlisted in 'London Life', Network Rail-Guardian News- Media and Bankside Gallery, London. *Liverpool Street Station*, oil on canvas.

#### **Selected Collections:**

1. 2015 June *Concerto in the night* , oil and acrylic on canvas, Venice Art House, Italy.
2. 2015 March *Morning Archive*, acrylic and digital photo print on canvas, Venice Art House , Italy
3. 2014 April *After Degas*, ink on paper, sold by Saatchi Art to a French Collector.
4. 2013 Aug *From Matisse to Hokusai No. 5*, original screen-mono print on calico, sold by Saatchi Art to an Indian-English Collector in London

#### **Publication:**

1. Zaman Z. (2011) *New Fashion Designers' Sketchbooks*, London, Bloomsbury Publishing ISBN 978-1-4081-4062-8
2. *no barking aRt Magazine* issues, (2015-2017) , as editor  
     2017 issues 4 *from cities with love*  
     2014 issue 3 *Senses and Desires*,  
     2014 issue 2 *She*  
     2014 issue 1 *oNe*

*no barking aRt magazines* are created with the collaborative efforts around specific themes devised by myself and the invited artists. My role is a major contributor and the editor. Each Issue is published over the course of five months concurrently, or approximately two to three per year. (see figs on page 119-120)

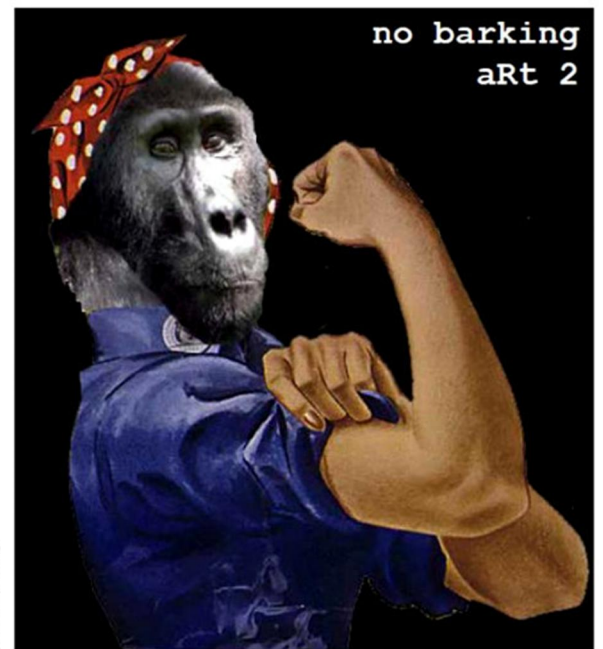
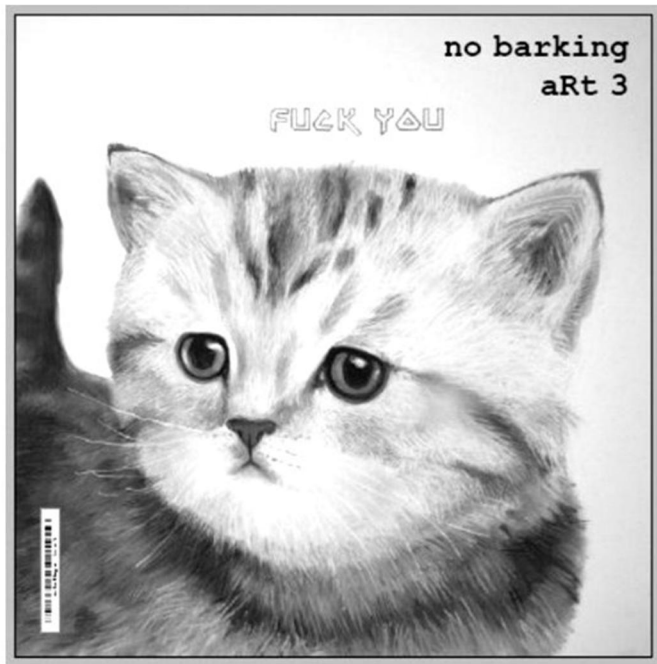
The latest issue 4 *from Cities with Love* will be published summer 2017, featuring major interviews including Tsibi Geva from his *Venice Biennale* Provillion, alongside a video interview also published on Vimeo.





Gloria Lin. 2014. *Make us human*. A photo project to mark the inauguration of  
*no barking aRt* magazine.





*no barking aRt magazines 2014-2016*

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## Notes

1. Charlie Rose interview with Sculptor Richard Serra, traces the development of his art from his childhood experiences and Yale education to his present work (2001) in *Charlie Rose Special Edition* for his exhibition in Gagosian Gallery in New York City.
2. Irish writer Colm Tóibín interviewed by Tonny Vorm on his approach to writing and how a novel can begin with, in connection to the *Louisiana Literature Festival* at the Louisiana Museum of Modern Art. Denmark. August 2015.
3. *Jardin Public* (1993), *No Way* (1996), *Present Tense* (1996), *Interior/Exterior Landscape* (2010), *Twelve Windows* (2012-13)
4. The word dis-belonging is adapted from an essay by Patricia Falguieres published in Hatoum's exhibition catalogue *Mona Hatoum, Shift* 2012.
5. Virtual Reality Walk-about gallery tour on no barking art website for the exhibition *Educating Picasso*. (Nov 2015)  
<http://www.nobarkingart.com/educating-picasso-2015.html> on-line accessed 23 April 2017
6. On Appendix: Timeline. Stage 1-4 written from referencing Supervision record, Karen Raney, tutorial 22 March 2016, Tutorial with Karen Raney and Eric Great-Rex 22 March 2016, and Tutorial with Susan Stockwell and Karen Raney, April 2016
8. According to Freud, "Fixation" is the state in which an individual becomes obsessed with an attachment to another person, being, or object (in human psychology): "*A strong attachment to a person or thing, especially such an attachment formed in childhood or infancy and manifested in immature or neurotic behavior that persists throughout life*"



## Summary

To give a summation of the achievement in theoretical research, creative and professional practice on the doctoral programme, I have to start from the title:

### **The namesake, *Loss, Repetition and the Everyday***

Loss and repetition are my soul and flesh as a creative person; the everyday gives a platform for my creativity to come to the realisation. Before this doctorate, I did not know, I just did my works, like a primitive animal.

My supervisor gave me the guidance whenever I was in need. At the first year of the doctorate, she helped me to name the title of my essay *Loss, Repetition and the Everyday* which has helped me to locate my practice within a structure which kept my wide-range of work-in-progress in focus. My supervisor sees me before I do, this title *loss, repetition, and the everyday* has grounded me and helped me to understand the true nature of my practice.

### **Theoretical research**

The training from film and design years allows me to practice with a research method that finds inspirations from not only artists but also from architecture, art history, film, literature, sound and all sorts of directions; yet, I found the breakthrough of the theoretical research on women artists in Doctorate years, especially in the final part of Doctorate. It was the first time I could see my work in relation with other great women artists in contemporary art. As much as I refused to place myself within the lineage, the research had brought me home. I was like a lost weed in a forest who finally found my origin, my botanical family and my place in the tree. I finally know what I am as an artist, a women artist. This new understanding combines with my film background and my fascination in art and technologies will carry me to continue grounding myself in art practice at the same time looking out for the world to make work that relevant to the world around me.

### **Creative practice**

Continuing to embrace the multi-disciplines and mediums, I come to know my strength and make the best of it; I have found my voice as an artist and built work strategies for my creative practice in these Doctorate years. Writing this essay has helped me to understand deeply the cores in my practice and made the invisible force behind my works clear to me. The understanding of my own practice through writing this essay feeds back to my work development.

## **Professional practice**

I believe to be an artist is to be responsible for my works. A work has to be treated as an individual once it was made; it deserves a space to breathe and find its own life in connection with other human beings. It is my responsibility to show my works once I made them; that is why I have to exercise my professional practice, not because of any other mean. And these exhibitions lead me to new ideas for my practice to move forward.

Other than showing my own works, I practice this not-for-profit art production, No Barking Art which frees me from fear by helping and giving other independent artists a platform to show their works; it is a human thing to do and I believe in family, an art family like those impressionists or Pre-Raphaelites. Though when I curate, I don't show my own work, I serve for artists, I commit myself and time to make great shows for them. I have seen numerous artists in their fifties to seventies, showing their works for the first time then kept on launching their art career after my no barking art shows. And this makes me believe, I am doing the right thing.

## **Reflection of Doctorate years**

I come to art through hunger, through desperate needs of a shelter, solace, protection and self-realisation. Me and art practice is a simple relationship, very direct. I want nothing in return from my work. But I want to connect to the work in the richest level; I don't want to be in an echo chamber with myself in the studio.

This doctoral education to me is like a temple and church to a religious person. I come here because I want to know my god and to learn the craft of living as a religious art believer; I want to equip myself with skills of how to be critical, to question and apply research to cross exam my work. This Prof. Doctorate programme allows me to practice, research and write about my own work through critical thinking, examination and base on a strong foundation in studio practice.

And in these Doctorate years, I've met my mentor who taught me to question, to challenge myself in practice, to dig into the core and the intension, and to reason and unreason. With the mentoring from my supervisors, I have found breakthroughs and able to apply what I've learnt and moved forward in my practice. For example, one ground-breaking moment was to learn to let my works go. I was a very private person and shy about showing my personal life in my works despite all of my works are very personal; I spoke in codes, in abstraction and hiding in my works. But through sharing my work-in-progress with colleagues and the encouragement from my mentors, I come to realise I have to let my work has its own life. I opened up myself to my practice and learnt to be strong even when I felt vulnerable in my works. I have faith and trust that art would do its work for me. And this breakthrough brought me many new works that truly spoke for my practice with newer and rawer energy.

My supervisor has been the support who gave me strength, pushed me toward deadlines, and kept me on track and in focus. I love to rely on and trust a person so the world could become simpler to me, with less noise and less doubt. Then I could just focus on my practice and listen to supervisors' pieces of advice and challenges. Without my mentor, my art practice would be a lonelier and more clueless journey in these Doctorate years.

I have learnt to demand my work that needs a strong reason to be; I've learnt to distinguish what is a real work from a study; I have learnt to be critical on what I do through being critical of others' works. The training of critical thinking ultimately equips me to be critical of my own practice. I love these sharp observations I have picked up from these seminars and training in Doctorate years and with a humble heart.

Though the future is unknown, but I am ready for more projects and continuing to be critical of my own practice. It is important to be critical in order to move forward. The writing of this essay and the training from these Doctorate years is just another start and a solid one to spring from.



## Appendix

### Timeline

#### Work Progress in Prof Doctorate Years

Intensive discussions with my supervisors have been the most helpful element in the development of my practice. Artists research, exhibitions visiting and theory readings are also the foundations of my practice at this stage.

I have considered the development of my work over the preceding Prof Doctorate years in six stages.<sup>6</sup> :

#### Stage 1 : Autumn 2014 –Winter 2015

##### Prof. Doctorate Project starts from :

- A. *Family Album* series (Sep2014 -Jun 2015) see more details on pages 20-21.
- B. Residency : Venice Art House (Mar 2015) see more details on pages 88-89.

##### Solo exhibition, *Lady in No. 5* (October 2015)

Following the showcase exhibition in June 2015, I took a solo exhibition opportunity as a project to reflect on and look forward to ideas for my upcoming practice. I wanted to test new ideas by setting up an exhibition in a larger contained space.

This solo exhibition provoked a series of new directions in my studio practice later on, both in the making of installations and developing my video/film language.

It took place in Truman Brewery Gallery 12 in October 2015. The floor plan of the site offers two levels of interior space. It is like a stage with an open lobby entrance, the tall glass front windows giving the openness in a gallery space that I was looking for.

The high-ceilinged walls also offered a larger wall space to arrange my 2D works in a different format, a chance to try new ways to present the same group of works from photographs to drawings (*Morning Archive*-photos, *Favor*- drawings and *Genesis*-etchings).

The upper level created a natural separation from the rest of the 2D and 3D works, housing three projections in a joined installation space. Ironically, as much as I love the natural light, it was in the darkness of the night when the upper gallery was lit up by my three video

installations that gave me ideas for future video projection practice. It accidentally created a surreal space that was very real yet very dream-like, very evocative for me of the space of memory.

Installation, video work and other two-dimensional works are all in the service of my obsession to keep my memories alive through different ways of making. I started sketching a series of spatial installations, intending to create a place for escaping into the landscape of my mind. I want to experiment with forms and materials that allow me to play with time and the relationship between time and space. In honour of my film and theatre background, I find creating a space is a very effective way to transport myself into another space and another time. I hope my works can also transport viewers according to their own memories and desires.

The video projections serve my practice in many ways. At times it's close to a record or a documentary of particular memories; at other times it's more like a painting of invented mental states or landscapes. Colour and light are also brought to the space in the speed of time through the film projection.

After this solo exhibition, much discussion has taken place with my supervisors which enabled me to focus on the new developments.



Figs. Two levels at the gallery are offering ideal divisions for different mediums.2015



Fig Details of *Family Album 2015* Installation, mixed mediums, family garments, gravels, tatami pads. 3x 4 meters.

## Project development

1.*Long Table*: Inspired by my recent family reunion which I was not able to attend. The seat my family saved for me in my absence moved me to work on an installation for this memory.



Fig. Family Reunion 2016



2.*Broken Bottles*: To make a landscape of a broken memory by using clear glass water bottles or wine bottles clothed with family garments as a continuation of my first year installation where I filled family garments with gravel then slit through the surface of the cloth in the nature of an injury.

3.*Filmic works*: Documentary films of journeys which evoke memories of loving events.

a. Edinburgh Train journey shot

b. Venice studio to gallery day journey

c. London city walks: Hampton Court river boat ride, Thames Southwark journey, Barbican night walk, Tube journeys, District Line from west to east London

d. Go-pro Dog Cam project: "*The day when Favor cannot walk*". The project had been developed into a series of in-house time-lapse documentary instead due to the fact that my dog is no longer able to walk by himself and carrying a go-pro camera has been an extra burden to his already deteriorated condition. This film project would be later developed into a projection installation for the third year work in 2017.

4.*Lunch Box series*

A project related to my childhood wishes. I had a deep longing for something which I never had: school lunch boxes filled by my family with homemade cooking. I had a memory of fake sample foods in café windows I often walked past when I was a child in Japan. I was never able to have these foods in real life and my desire for them was the only warmth to me in the darkness of the years when I was living with my family in Japan. The fake food and lunch box images have a strong place in my imagination as something that I wish one day I can have prepared for my children or for myself.

*Lunch Box* is also an extension of the *Long Table* project. The element of food in boxes for a family reunion is there to be played against the setting of the table. I extended the lunchbox idea in *The Wedding* installation which will take place in showcase June 2016. I will make a refrigerator full of food which evokes memories of the loved one whom I devote this work to. The casted refrigerator will serve as a visual banquet menu in *The Wedding* installation.

5.*Drawings*

Alongside taking photos, drawing is almost a daily activity to develop graphic sensitivity and observation skills. Drawings also serve as another way to document my day to day life.

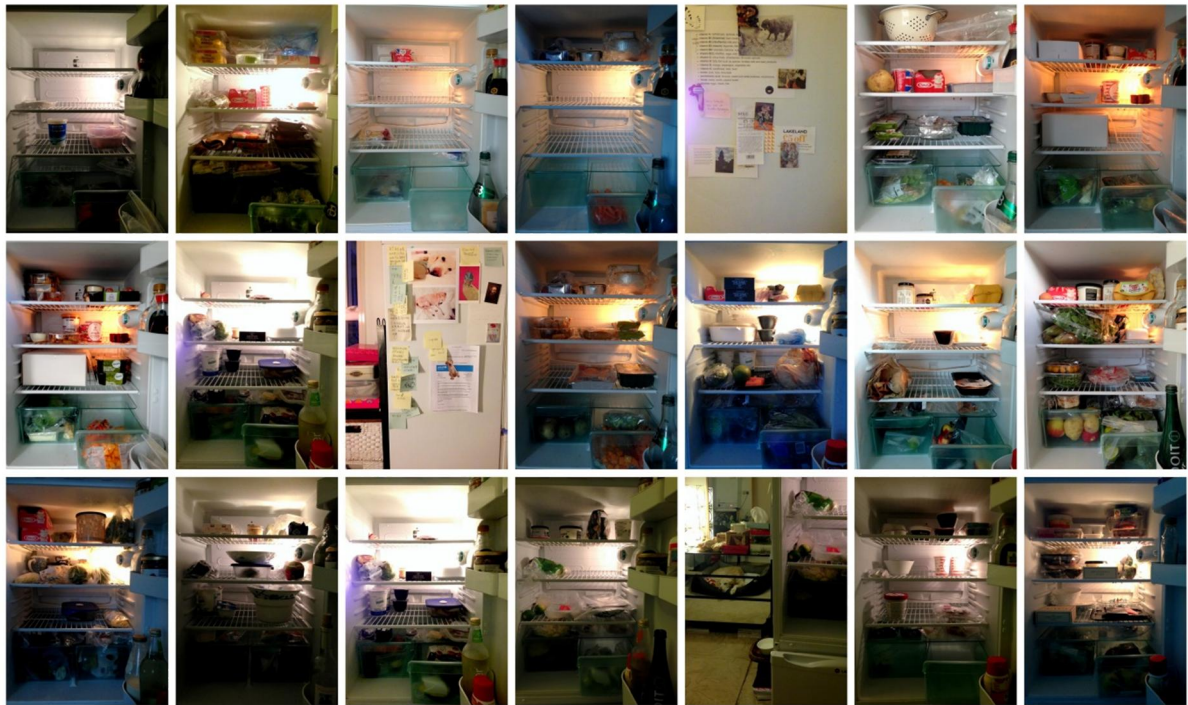


Fig. Refrigerator project for Lunch Box research, 2015-16, photography.



Fig. Daily Drawing Series , Favor 2015-16

### Curatorial Project *Educating Picasso* (November 2015)

This curatorial project invited twenty two artists who are also teachers to exhibit their work in a gallery in East London. None of my own work was exhibited, but I learned a great deal. more details are written in Chapter Six Professional Practice. (pages: 101-107)

## Stage 2 : Spring 2016

In December 2015 I had a meeting with supervisor Karen Raney. The result of this was a better understanding of how I might develop my work from the elements discussed in stage 1. It was necessary to choose from the many projects I had underway, a few to focus on. Over the Christmas period I developed new works in four areas:

### ***Long Table Project***

#### *Broken wine bottles mock-up*

I wished to retain the textures of the rice and gravel, trying new materials; chipped crystal glass replaced gravel in this work in order to allude to a particular memory. Also sparkling water bottles and pills replaced wine bottles in the *Long Table* work.

The forms and shapes of these broken bottles create a landscape, like the landscape of the memory or a city in ruins.

This *Broken Bottle* work has been a revelation in terms of studio work development. The work stayed outdoors in my garden for weeks; every day, despite the weather, it remained the same. I feel the work has a life of its own. This inspired me to find solutions to preserve this large broken landscape. After extensive research, I decided clear resin of epoxy was the answer. The testing of clear resins has been a rich experiment, from bio-clear resin to its more economical substitute, water clear polyester casting resin. I want to devote the rest of few months in 2<sup>nd</sup> year to the understanding and manipulation of the clear resins.

*Broken Bottles* and *Long Table* have been developed into another two works in Stage 3: *Red wine and white shirt* and *The Red*. (figures in next two pages)

The length of the long table might be up to 2.4 meters - a good length to house family members for a reunion; chairs might be introduced later on to the final installation.



Fig. Gloria Lin. Dec. 2015. *Broken Bottles*.



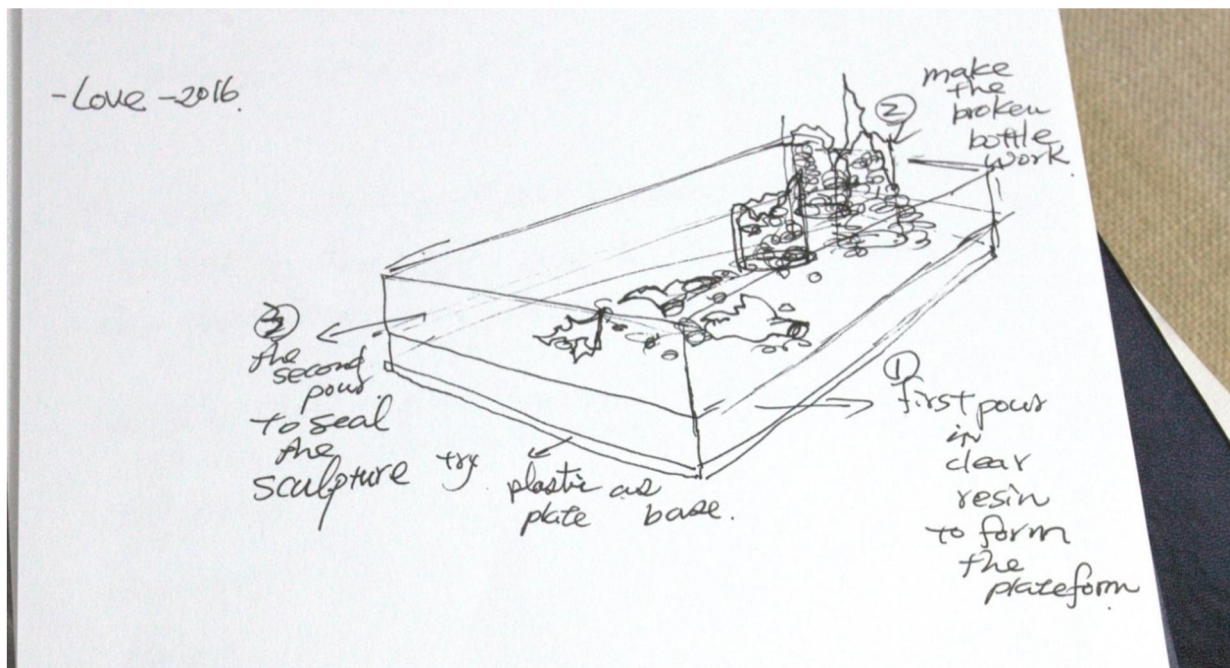


Fig. Original drawing ( Jan 2016): Working out how to preserve *Broken Bottles* installation.



Fig. Gloria Lin. Dec. 2015. *Red Wine and White Shirt*.



Fig. *The Red* 2016

### ***Inventory Project***

I want to document the objects that evoke deep memories of different stages of my life. I want to use cast and mould technique to document the objects of my memories. (fig. next page) By casting the objects, I can destroy the original objects and transform them into the language of art beyond time. I also want to deal with these casts in space and time through installation rather than treating the cast objects as sculptures.

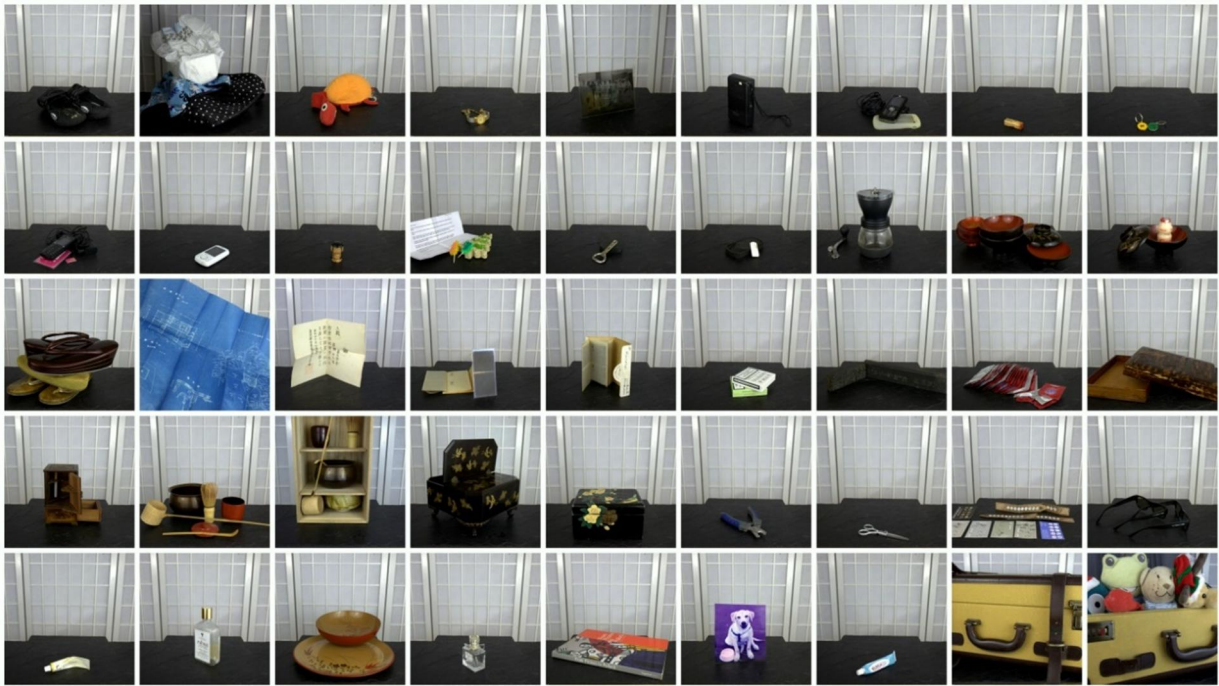


Fig. Gloria Lin. 2015-16. *Inventory Project*.

## Stop-Motion and Animated Films

1.A series of photographs of the chosen objects were made then edited to a stop-motion film on *Inventory project*. Stop Motion film is a format and visual language I am personally very interest in. I find stop motion animation closer to the language of photography than cinema. Stop-motion changes the 2D nature of photos to moving images. Also moving image involves time and light which are elements I wish to deal with in current projects.

2. *Animation Project* : I want to transform my drawings into animated moving images for future projection project in 2017.

The process started from the use of translucent animation paper instead of tracing paper. These professional papers maintain the see-through quality of a tracing paper but not as hard and it also increases the absorption of the ink when I do quick drawings.

A LED light box also had been added to my drawing process, to create animated frames in order to create movement.

Animation software is to be studied, so I can speed up the finishing/editing process. My first test is on “Blender”, a free software, I will upgrade the software when I start to get familiar with the process later on.



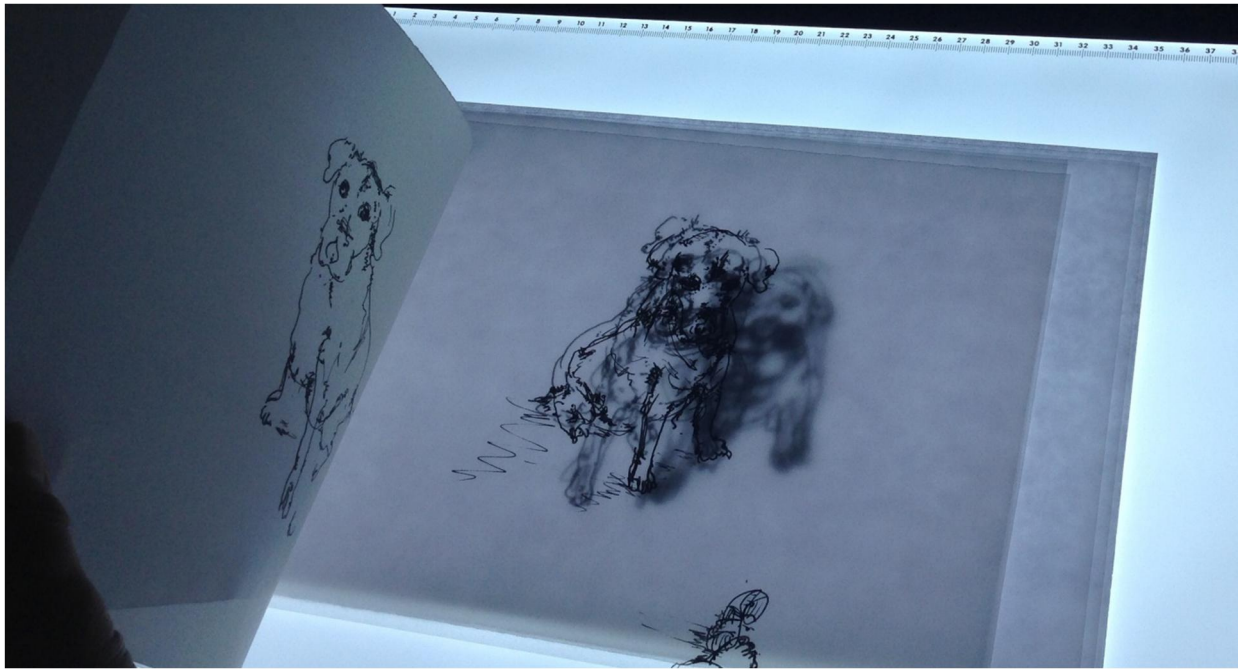


Fig. Using animation tools, LED light box and professional paper for *Animation project* test drawing. 2016

### LED Light Box with Japanese Screens

*Sculpture haven't done much of into, through and around, that's the problem of architecture, how do you deal with sculpture of walk-into-through and around and avoid architecture, maybe I can make space as much part of content as the material, ...space really became my subject...*

--- Richard Serra (2001)<sup>1</sup>

Because of the use of LED animation light box, I discovered LED light could be a great resource for my work. To apply the light behind the Japanese Screen, for instance, I can work with the free standing nature of the screen to develop the concept of spaces within a space to create the spaces in the dark. These screens will be standing up in the space rather than on plinths, a strategy which Richard Serra believes will bring viewers into the space of the sculpture.<sup>1</sup>

I also took some model pictures to explore the possibilities of using the screen with the light box. The freestanding nature of Japanese screens and the light box light source have great potential to be developed for my 3rd year studio works.

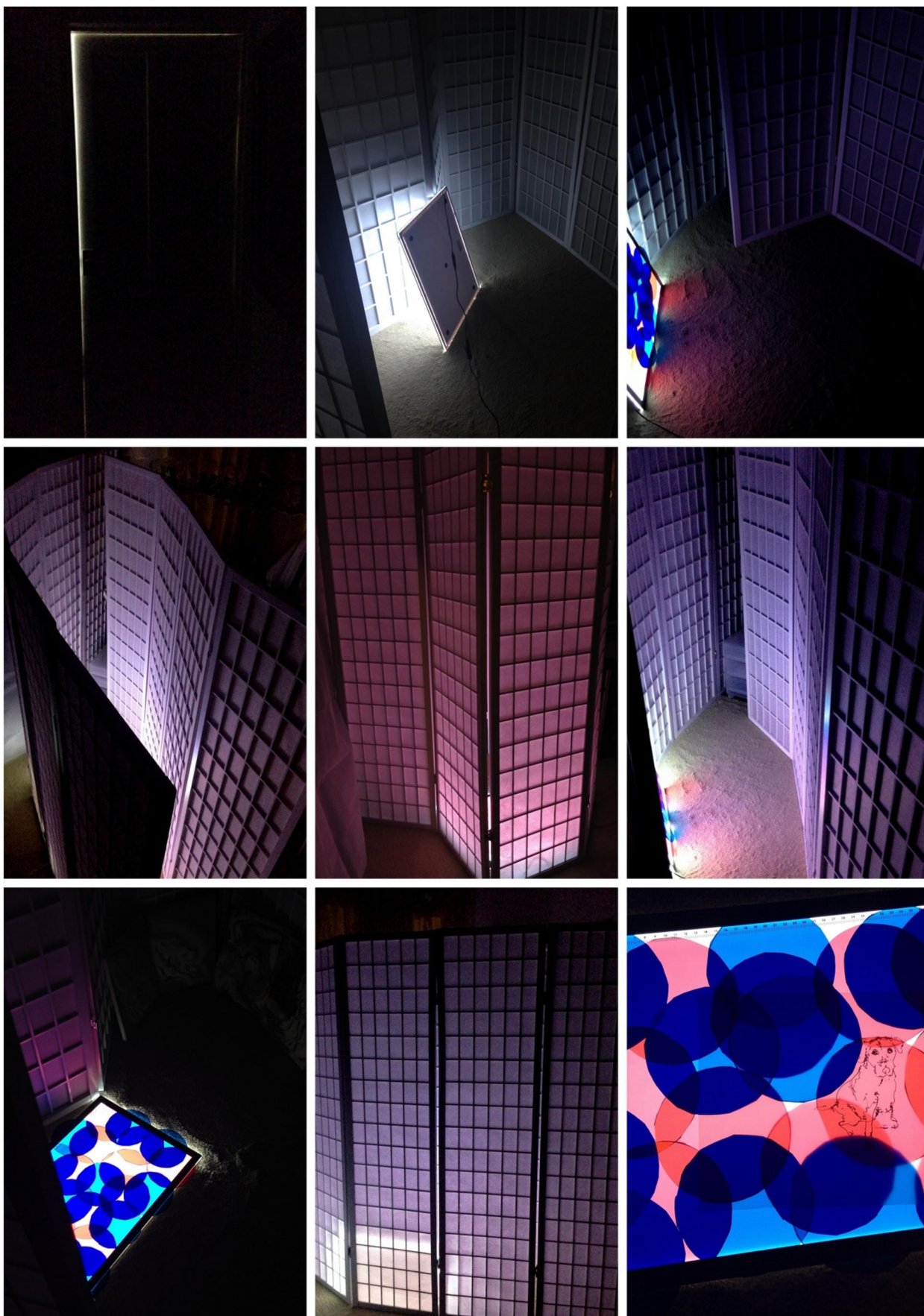


Fig. Gloria Lin. Dec.2015. *Light Box /Screen project*. Work in progress.

### Stage 3 : Late Spring 2016

After visiting my 2<sup>nd</sup> Supervisor Susan Stockwell's studio with Karen Raney Jan 2016, I started realising the *Inventory project*.

#### ***Inventory Project development***

Starting from knowing different resins and basic mould making skills, I then set up a home-based studio space for my full time cast and mould experiments, which include the use of vacuum chamber and casting in various resins from silicon moulds I made.



Fig. Test-casting: polyurethane and clear resin casts. 2016

Alongside this intensive process, were several side products. One was a documentary film exploring the day to day life of taking care of my ill dog next to the studio hours I work on casting and mould over a 6 weeks period. Six weeks of care-taking and casting was condensed through speeding up into a film of 8 minutes (*Favor*) and 12 minutes (*Studio*).

I discussed with my tutors whether these films should be a piece of work on its own or remain as documentation for my personal use.

It never was my intention to expose my private life. Despite how highly personal my works are, I feel much more comfortable when the private life remains hidden in the works I make rather than when it is revealed directly. It has been a big challenge for me to share my private visual materials with the public. This development had thought me to open up and allow my works to have its own life.



I have come to understand that the sense of wanting to regain control over loss and mourning in this recent period of my life has been the hidden force of my new work development. Through understanding resins and difficult mechanic process such as the skills of using hand tools, drills, motors, and the fundamental solution the use of hammer drill to install most of the heavy duty works at home and studio are also feeding back into my desire to be in control of the sudden loss of my partner and my dog's mobility.

Another element I have become aware of is to do with my father. My father died alone without much help around him in the later part of his life. I have carried a deep sense of regret ever since. Time has gone by since his death, but the event is still as close to me as ever. I am able to deal with these losses and confront difficult issues up close and thoroughly through making art works. It's also a process of healing.

Taking care of my ill dog is also like dealing with my own aging. I have developed serious Carpal tunnel syndrome and an elbow condition from carrying my paralysed dog around since winter 2015. This made me in reality, also become disabled like my dog, both my hands and his legs are suffering with severe pain. These emotions and physical pain I felt for him and myself, the loss of loved ones, and the imaginative link with my father, all have been part of the dialogues in my latest works.

Perhaps the films document my ability to live and manage alone, to take care of my ill dog on my own and later take care of a garden. Through discussion and feedback I perceived the 'manic' quality of these films which has resonance for myself, my process and my work. I find myself working louder (more manic) to shut out the noise of my desperation, the pain of my emotion and my aching body. Therefore I intended to exhibit these films in some way in future installations. And indeed, it did. After embracing the power of documentary materials I later progressing this concept to make a film while I was taken a residency in 2016. This new film gives birth to a major installation for my 2nd solo exhibition , Nov 2016.

### ***Long Table project development***

Continuing on from the family reunion and the broken bottle ideas, in discussion with my supervisor, I then developed three scenarios of the *Long Table* project.

Through research and drawings, one of the visions I arrived at is seeing a train of my Kimono wedding dress as a table cloth, running across a long table, its train stitched with patterns relating to two rivers of a journey. The programme team (Eric Great-Rex and Karen Raney) also suggested the possibility of adding the existing clear resin bowls and goblets with objects embedded in it on top of the wedding dress table runner. The wedding photos of family and friends might also be theme to develop in future. I have tried a Hologram screen test on a glass table, using short throw projection from the floor instead of from overhead ceiling as a way of developing the projected dimension of this work.

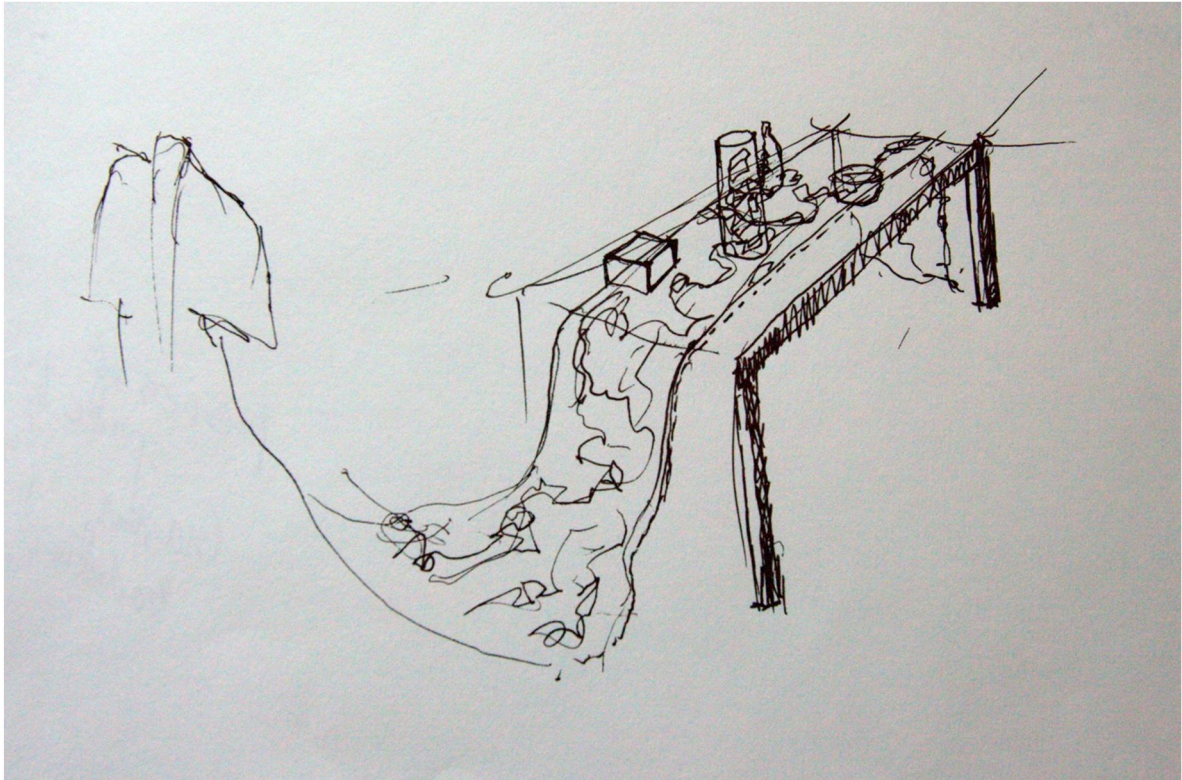


Fig. Before and after: Original drawing for *the Wedding* installation. Realisation view 2016

## Archive work continued

### 1.Filmic Journeys (*Memory Landscape*):

I have added Micro, wide angle and fisheye lens to i-phone when shooting journeys on phone while filming in the city. Nowadays, people shoot pictures and films on phones when travelling. I would like to shoot this *Journey project* on a phone to make the films relevant to the public.

### 2.Lunchbox Series continued:

Research on Japanese サンプル Sample food culture, developed from my childhood memory of the fake food samples in Café display windows. I have tried to find Japanese plastic food manufacturers for months. I have narrowed down the area to manufacturers in 合羽橋 Kappabashi the largest and oldest fake food culture centre for over one hundred years in Japan. This might be where I will import materials for my lunch box project in 2017.

### 3.Soft Material development:

Using family members' garments, mom's kimono, obi and geta for the development of the making of my wedding dress which would be stitched with landscape, rivers of memories. Test fabric sample: I made drawing by using Irish machine (hand-drawn machine for sewing) My first sample was made on white satin fabric with stitches of memory journeys through rivers (*From Thames to River Tay*. Fig. Below)



Fig . Gloria Lin. 2016. *Rivers* : hand stitch with Irish Machine ,fabric- Silk Satin.



#### 4. **Family Album** continued

paper cut out series--For finding pure forms in memories through a collection of my family wedding photos.



Fig. Gloria Lin. 2015-16 *The wedding Photos ( A Family Album series )*

#### **Meeting with Supervisor and Programme tutor**

After showing my casting resin samples and some finishing works of clear resin series, my supervisor pointed out that the choice of resin is has the possibility in terms of the aesthetic resonance of layering, translucency, freezing of items trapped within it.



Fig. Gloria Lin. 2016. *Memory Box*, work in progress.

There are numerous drawings I made on the development of clear resin project, including:

1. The possibility of slicing the resin block which encapsulates my family items as to further transforming the image of memory.
2. More research from glass objects in V and A and British Museum. I want to explore the possibilities of casting clear resins from references of glass works. They both have the quality of translucence in object making.
3. To apply resin casting technique on *Long table* project, for instance, cutting the legs of family furniture then casting it with objects embedded in it.
4. Small objects (family memory related) to be cast in one big panel of Japanese screen which serves as a filter and as the wall of memory, referring to the ruins of archaeological sites like Pompeii- which also relates to the quality of memory.

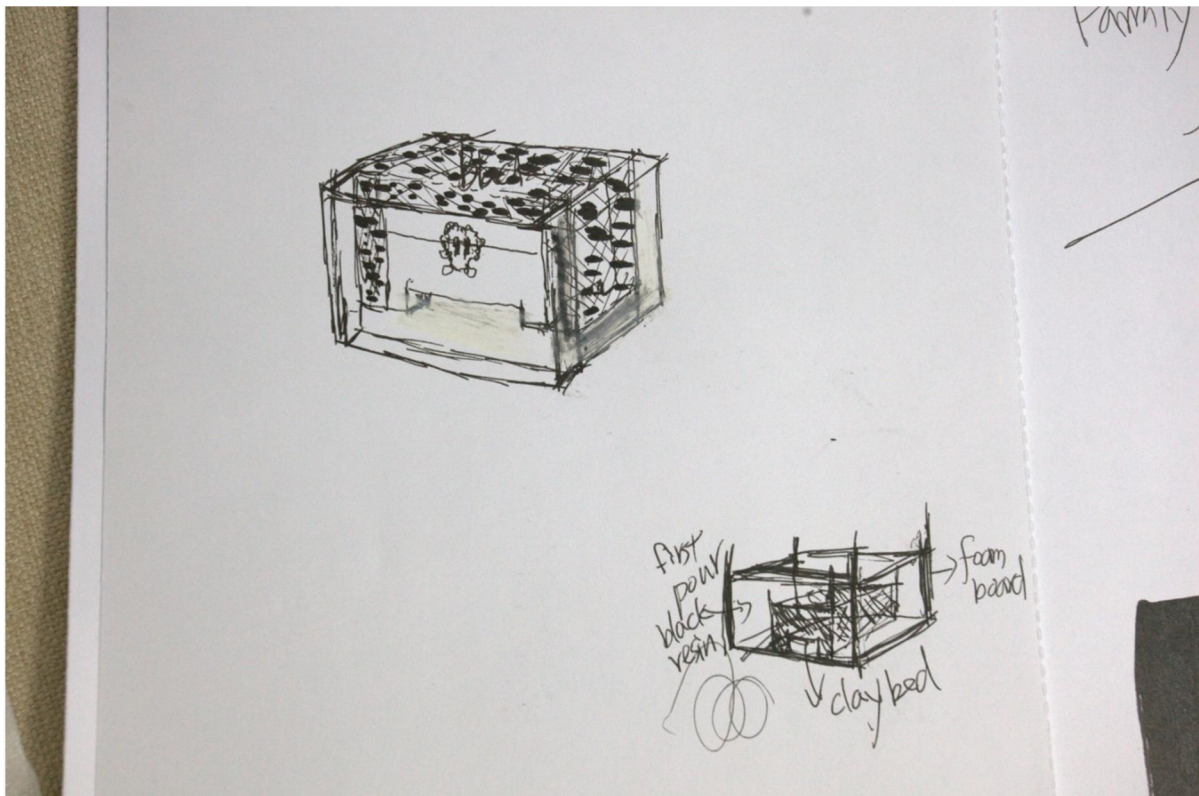


Fig. Gloria Lin. 2016. Working drawing for *Inventory Project/ Memory box series*

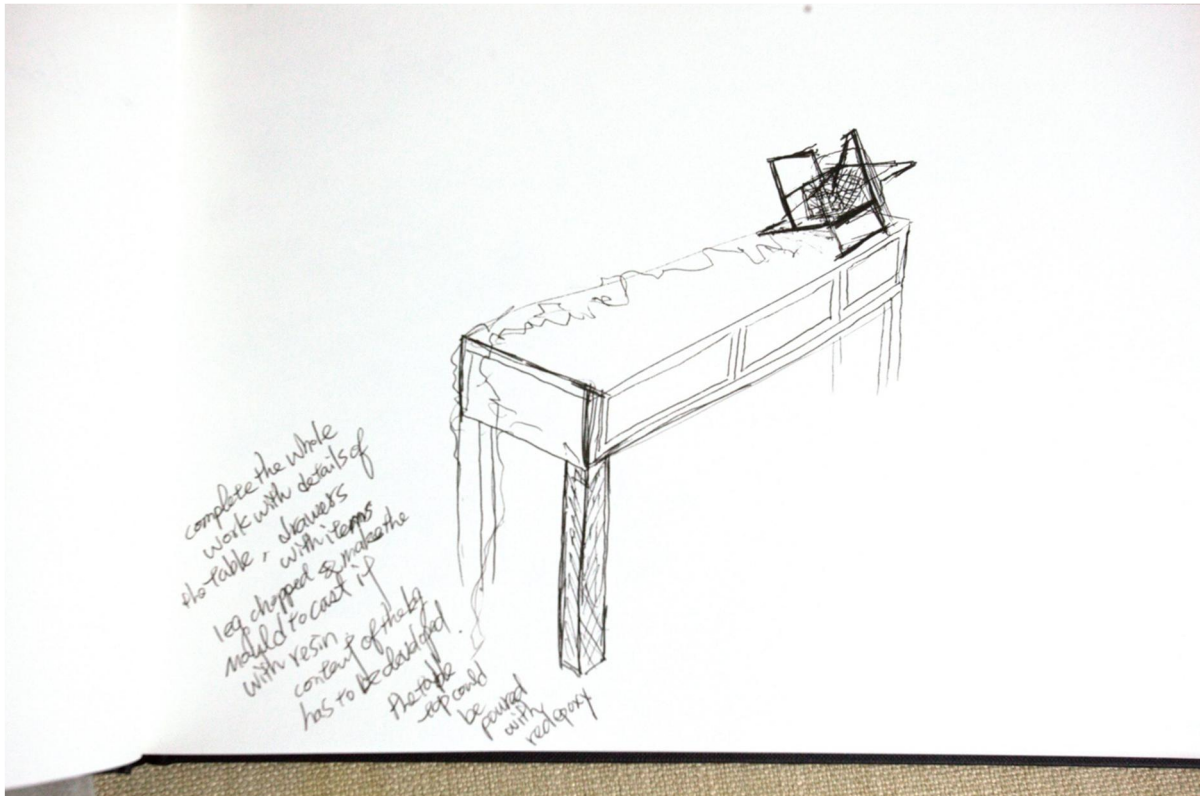


Fig. Gloria Lin. 2016. A sketchbook-page for *Long table project*

#### Stage 4 : Summer 2016

##### ***The Wedding Project***

Creating the wedding kimono led me to decide to make not only a wedding dress but to make an installation of a wedding, a wedding that was meant to happen this year but will now not take place. I immersed myself fully in planning this project from the kimono making. I was cautioned to test out ideas before I spend a lot of time and money without knowing how the idea would be realised. I tried some 3D ideas with flexible wire and pieces of fabric and came up with the idea of a three dimensional wedding dress train. The dress will have 'river' embroidery whereas the train will be like a three dimensional sculpture. Also I decided to develop a menu of the wedding which will be a refrigerator encapsulating foods and ingredients with clear resin.





Figs. Gloria Lin. 2016. Silhouette drawing and fabric combination testing; working progress for the *Wedding Project*.



Figs: Working progress for the *Wedding project*



Fig. Rivers. 2016. 3D fabric sculpture idea- working progress for the *Wedding Project*.



## Garden Project

It is only human nature to seek the escape from the harsh reality. I long to transform my current and past sorrows into art work and at the same time, to find refuge in the works: the making of works become the escape of my reality.

*...something larger than the mind, it could be an image, ...it could be a memory, ...what happened is one of them moved into a rhythm when you least expected, in other words, you could be on your holidays, or you could be on a Friday night about to go out, And suddenly would come a sentence, and the sentence would have the full weight of a novel in it, it's like a melody...*

--- Colm Tóibín<sup>2</sup> Irish writer.

The escape I found by accident for myself was in the plants I bought to brighten up the dark period of this first Christmas being alone. The more pain my dog and I suffered, the longer I sat and watched the plants outside the garden window. Looking at these plants gave me great comfort.

There was never any pot or plant in my garden, only weeds. The idea came to me in Room 3 of the exhibition *Delacroix and the Rise of Modern Art* in National Gallery in March 2015. While I looked at the flower still life Delacroix painted which never moved me, but in this visit, seeing still lifes made by Cézanne and Van Gogh put side by side with their muse Delacroix's works, the power of still life and Van Gogh's flower vase series moved me deeply.

I finally understood from within, these vases of flowers are the life portrait of these artists' landscape of mind; human suffering; the energy of life. The colour of flowers suddenly was not a cliché any more. It became apparent to me that I want to make the garden. The garden that my dog can recover from this summer, the garden that I myself can heal with, the garden that never happened that my loved one and I were planning to start. I want to finish through art what has never been done in life, as I want to create the wedding that never took place.



2015, planting from plugs and seeds –preparing for installation next year.  
( plant-Heather: related to the memory of my loved one)



### Insights gained from supervisory tutorials and work in progress seminars

1. Two kinds of artistic vocabulary are evident from my works. One is a vocabulary of excess which comes across as manic, obsessive, repetitive, accumulative. This element is represented by my speeded up time-lapse films and the amassing of things like pills, broken bottles and in some of multiple photography works.

“The other kind of aesthetic vocabulary is to do with the frozen, immobilised, silent, muteness of the resin and the white casts. ”

It was suggested these two kinds of aesthetic could be usefully played off one another. Also in the next meeting she suggested the colourful garden works and the mute tone of wedding dress and clear resin casting can also be played off one another.



Figs. Gloria Lin. 2016. *The Wedding Series*. Bio-Clear Risen, family items:  
Casts in 4 liter and 1 liter sizes.

2. The need for overarching ideas, visual and conceptual to tie together my different pieces. *The Wedding* idea might serve that function.

3. The problem of transforming personal material into a form that communicates to viewers who do not share the personal memories with me. Through editing, careful consideration

of materials and my artistic decisions, and considering feedback from viewers, I can lift my personal material to a more universal level. Work that starts being about my own particular memories can end up being about the nature of memory itself.

4. Find ways of testing ideas first. I tried out the soft material development before I started to make the dress. It was through doing these tests that I came up with the idea of developing on the Irish sewing machine hand stitches to 3 D fabric manipulation to make the 2D rivers into 3D forms. Develop scenarios for the long table project through drawings, writings, photographs films small scale models to find ways to play and test my ideas. There will be a small mock up work in my own garden where my two supervisors will come to see the work and discuss the details for final work toward showcase in June 2016.

5. Research contemporary artists who have used the materials and ideas I am interested in. For example, I researched Vong Phaophanit's *Rice Field* before starting a costly rice piece, in order to consider how it has been done in art history as well as the strong personal resonance of the rice.

Francis Alys's marching regiments piece gave me ideas for developing the *Memories Landscape*. Based on the new research, I pushed my idea to include rivers of my memories in different cities (a collection of rivers of memory from each period of my life: Tay, Thames, Keelong, Giba, Huston and California sierras' rivers.)

6. Simplicity of form. The artists I am drawn to are a clue to what form my work might take. For example, the simplicity of Roni Horn's glass blocks might be relevant to my *Wedding* installation. To ask if the garden is to complicate the process, maybe to get the garden as another piece or I can try to find a way to fuse these elements together without the destruction and the confusion of the works.



Fig. Roni Horn. 2006. *Well and Truly*. Image © Roni Horn and Hauser & Wirth.

7. Casting process. Photographs of the cast objects displayed amongst real objects allowed me to visualise how the installation could be done.

8. Literal meanings. I was cautioned against becoming too literal in some pieces. The work, *The Red* contains wine bottle and pills cast over layers of red epoxy which supervisors thought to be possibly too direct and literal. I might work on how to transform the colour to

a more subtle muted tone while staying with my initial intention - the feeling I associate with pills and alcohol. Despite the use of pills by many contemporary artists, I want to try different strategies for owning pills as a resource for my personal visual language.



Figs. work in progress on developing display ideas for white casts.





Fig. Gloria Lin. 2016. *Red* in detail. Clear Resin, rice, pills and bottle.

9.Focus. I need to decide on the projects to develop first in the coming months. Karen Raney recommends immersing myself in one or two subjects at a time, in order to make full use of my imagination.

10. Time, money and deadlines. It is important to decide what is possible and most fruitful for me to undertake within these limitations.

## **On Materiality**

### **Research on Form , Abstraction and Post-minimalism**

As a disciple of impressionism and fauvism, I, as an artist, have moved away from a preoccupation with the richness of the colours. Since my design years, I have been drawn to simplicity of form and the absence of colour, whiteness and transparency in materials.

Working on various new materials, I hope somehow, through a complex process, to distil the mass contents down to few simple things, arriving to works that worthwhile to exist.

### **Mona Hatoum - Materiality and personal experience**

A triangle shape made by pubic hairs on a chair from a Parisian Café (1993), nuts and bolts sealed through the drainage holes on utensils from Jerusalem (1996), an outline of Palestinian territories drawn onto bars of olive oil soaps from the town of Nablus (1996), a hair embroidered pillow depicts flight routes of her visited cities (2010), twelve Palestinian

rugs made by Lebanese women from refugee camps in Inaash (2013)<sup>1</sup> It is more than three decades, since Hatoum shifted her practice from earlier performance and video art to more studio work. Her materials made into objects for installations are never anything but personal, regional and carefully chosen. Mona Hatoum's work embodies my belief as to how I as an artist should deal with materials. Her latest major exhibitions were at Centre Pompidou, Paris in 2015, and at Tate Modern, London in May 2016. Both show works created in various media and formats from performance, video, and installation to drawings, photographs, sculptures and objects. (Wallis. 2016:17)

Design training is all about developing one concept from as many angles and mediums as possible. My design background has influenced my studio practice since MA fine art years, till this day, I continue to work on film, photograph, drawing and sculpture which later to be applied into my installations. I believe whatever the genre and medium I work with, long as I have a purpose, meaningful concept and a core message, I could create authentic works to engage people's imaginations.

Mona Hatoum's work has been linked to that of Eva Hesse, an artist whose works have inspired me to experiment on resins. I was first impressed by her studio works which I constantly come back to for inspiration. In its *'sense of the uncanny... touch and handling the stuff of the world... the work [of Mona Hatoum] can also be understood as having roots in arte povera and certain type of post-minimalist work, most notably that of Eva Hesse.'* (Wallis. 2016:15)

Along with LeWitt, Oldenburg and Beuys, Hess displays her resin-made objects on top of and inside glass and metal cases, though unlike the male artists, Eva Hesse's latex is applied in layers. In Briony Fer's words: *'when latex is thin enough, is also layers the light'* (Fer, 2009:97) In the elements of sensuality, sensitivity and the handmade quality, I find a strong connection between my practice and Hesse's.

Latex and plaster are both traditional casting materials but Hesse said she wasn't interested in casting as such. She was interested in making casting materials misbehave, do things they were not meant to do. (Fer. 2009:97)

In my studio, I also find myself working toward controlling the misbehaviour of the resins rather than the straightforward application of the casting process. Chipped glass and other porous materials have inspired me to work with the resins in unorthodox, for example, casting porous materials with resins without the application of release agent, which should not be without when casting with porous materials. The experimentation with resins led to many new ideas.



Fig. Eva Hesse. 1968. *Repetition Nineteen III*  
Fiberglass and polyester resin, nineteen units, each 19 to 20 1/4" (48 to 51 cm)  
x 11 to 12 3/4" (27.8 to 32.2 cm) in diameter.

### Roni Horn

In the past decade, artist Roni Horn seems also to be working in the lineage of post-minimalism. In her latest installation at De Pont Museum, Netherlands (2016), a series of nine large transparent-tinted colour glass blocks were placed in two open spaces. The high ceilings which allow light to flood the space make these blocks look like floating lotus leaves floating, despite the solid density of the material. This installation shares the same characteristics as much of Horn's previous work: visually light, solid to the touch, transparent or translucent colours which in a subtle way allude to questions of perception and identity.

Post-minimalist works such as Hesse, Horn and Hatoum offer ideas for the direction my work could go: *'it is in the interface between materials and their metaphorical potential that the individual works meaning resides'*. (Wallis. 2016: 15)





Fig. Roni Horn. 2006. *Well and Truly*  
Image © Roni Horn and Hauser & Wirth

I allowed myself to devote the 2<sup>nd</sup> year of Prof Doc year in working with materials; I was hoping to understand the language and finding the potential of various materials which might be of use in my studio practice, especially on the materials which draw emotions from the meanings beyond the surface.

**1. Glass, mirrors, light projection and holograms,** materials I already use, can evoke some of the qualities of memory: transparent pictures in front of the eyes, unfolding layers of images that are there and not there at the same time, existing in another world which paradoxically is also inside this world.

**2. Other materials.** I want to develop my knowledge of other materials that can enhance my practice. These include rice, gravel, soft materials, Japanese screens, lino-cut blocks and outdoor composite materials - landscaping and gardening materials, and furniture-making materials.

Casting and moulding materials include clear bio-resin, silicon, Jesmonite, plaster, latex, polyurethane resin, easy-flow resin (use of slashing and fillers for larger size of casting) and alginate (for one- off life casting). Moulding methods vary depending on the size and texture of each object.

Using composite materials, I can create larger scale works having a more powerful physical presence in the space and these materials also help to make the objects and installations permanent.

### 3. Pills

I am aware of the use of pills in contemporary art from Damien Hirst to Carsten Holler's *Pill Clock*. However, pills have been a personal symbol of my suffering watching my father, my

grandmother and my dog suffer in their later years. I have witnessed not only the limitation of the drugs in alleviating the illness but also how drugs can destroy patient's health through unpleasant side effects. Recently I arrived at the point of denouncing the drugs that a Cambridge vet prescribed to my dog who has severe neurologic problems. My dog was very ill because of numerous side effects from the drugs. I then witnessed my dog hugely recovering since the drug treatment was stopped in October 2015. ( fig. below )

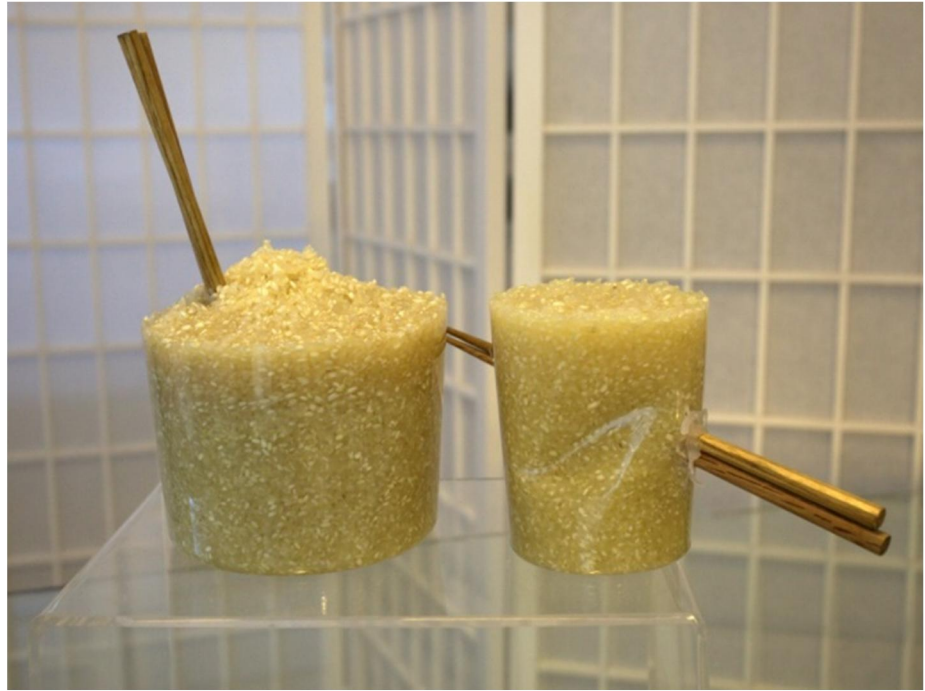
#### 4.Rice

Rice is a material close to my heart, as a symbol of loss, death, separation and the connection between the life and death. (figs. See next two pages) Rice was the inspiration for the gravel-covered floors in my previous installations. Rice directly links to my memory of the death of my loved ones. Also I am thinking of using rice from my family farm in Chiba, a county near Tokyo, Japan. It is the place of residence of my mother and my Otōsan's family (Japanese father) over hundreds years.



Fig Gloria Lin. 2015. *Lady and her dog*. Mixed mediums, pills, bottles, threads, paint.





Gloria Lin. 2016. *Funerals. Rice cast series.* 2016



Gloria Lin. 2016. *Walking with me.*





Gloria Lin. 2016. *Walking with me* –installation view (at my 2<sup>nd</sup> solo exhibition)  
 Mediums: Resin, Rice, Authentic damaged dog boots 2015-16.  
 Authentic owned leather dog collar and leash. 2001-2016.

### **Showcase 2016 June**

*The Wedding Project* realisation (Showcase Exhibition details are in Chapter Two: 2.2 Loss and Trauma)

## Stage 5 : Late Summer – Winter 2016

2<sup>nd</sup> Residency : Somerset Yeo Farm Estate ( Sep 2016)

1. Somerset *Daily painting series*. Starts a new series of two-Dimensional works: prepare for installation *Chapel Project* (2017) (see figs. on pages 157-158)
2. And produced a new documentary film for new solo exhibition : *as I lay in 1000 ways a documemory* (Nov 2016) (Details are in Chapter Five: 5.2 London)



Fig. Gloria Lin.2016. Somerset Residency: *Daily painting series*. Acrylic on canvas. 60x45 cm.





Figs: Gloria Lin.2016. *Daily painting series*. Acrylic on canvas. 60x45 cm/ each.

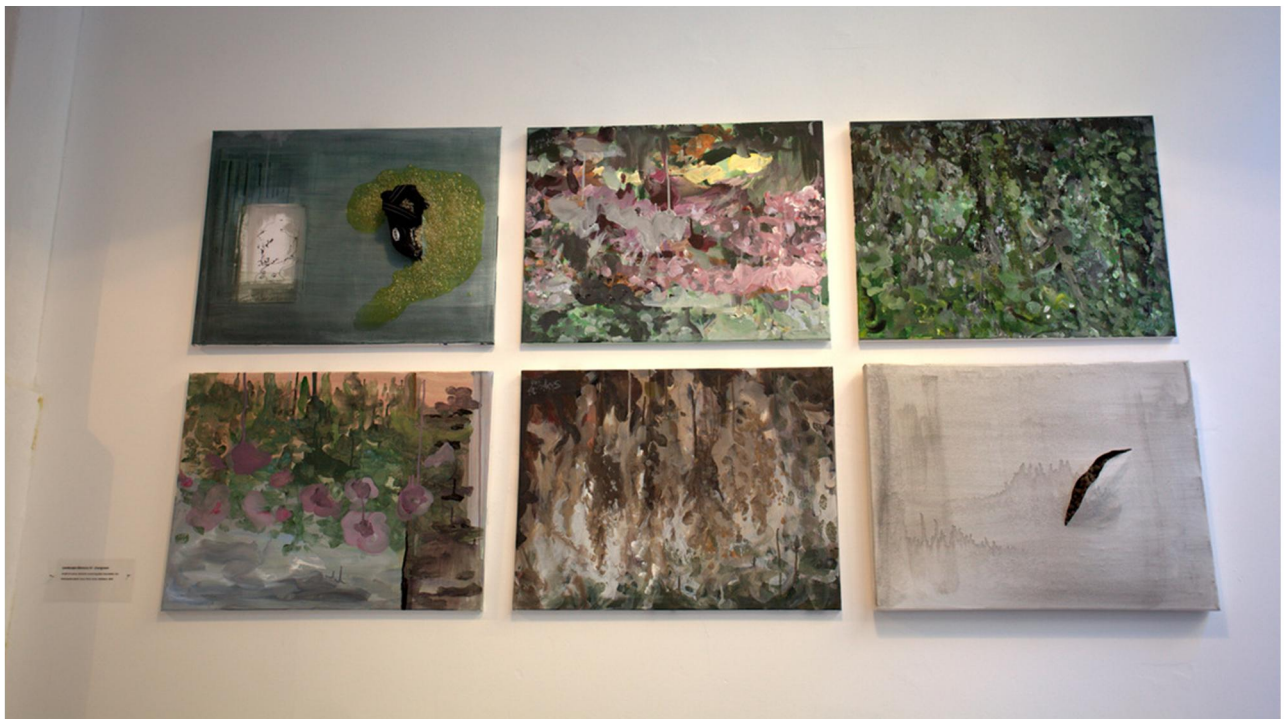


Fig. Gloria Lin.2016. *Daily painting series*. Mixed-mediums on canvas. 60x45 cm/each(depth varied) Installation view. London: Dray Walk Gallery Truman Brewery.



## Stage 6 : Final Doctorate Viva Exhibition- 2017

Reflection on the development from the 2<sup>nd</sup> solo show to the final Viva ideas:

1. Further experiment more on fabric by applying folding and shaping technic.  
Folded forms are bringing primitive energy, this is a new material language: referencing on 1. my fascination over Frank Ghary's buildings 2. Japanese kimono folding technic. (west meets east again).
2. I want to develop "space in another confined space" for my installations: to explore the possibility of "layers in the space".
3. New Project continue : *Documented Happiness / Daily Paintings*: a new drawing and writing project: started from 10<sup>th</sup> Dec 2016 on postcard-format, reference on On Kawara.
4. Final reflection on the relationship and influence between studio practice, my sketchbook drawings and the process of writing this essay: three elements are interwoven and feeding from one to another. I come to realise, the new research method for the future is to write alongside the practice (think of the making of catalogue for each exhibition) . The writing of this report has given me so much inspiration, it clears so many previous unknown and hidden reasons which are responsible for the way my works are, where I am and where I want to go next.